This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

PRESENTED BY
THE PUBLISHER

D
640
.H42

WOUNDED AND A PRISONER OF WAR

ENTENTE CORDIALE
CAMBRAI, NOV. 12, 1914

WOUNDED AND A PRISONER OF WAR

BY AN EXCHANGE OFFICER

". . . . . and it is the greatest danger that remains to be encountered by the Anglo-Saxon race."—JOHN DALBERG ACTON: *The Rise of Prussia.*

ILLUSTRATED

Hay, Malcolm Vaughan

NEW YORK
GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

COPYRIGHT, 1917,
BY GEORGE H. DORAN COMPANY

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

016 My 18 575

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	The First Ten Days	9
II	The Retreat	53
III	Cambrai	88
IV	Le Numéro 106	121
V	Stories from Le Numéro 106	161
VI	Cambrai to Würzburg	191
VII	Würzburg	234
VIII	Würzburg to England	287

George H. Doran Co (4-2-18) g
Reclass. MWP. 5-20-36
324190

ILLUSTRATIONS

ENTENTE CORDIALE, CAMBRAI, NOV. 12, 1914 *Frontispiece*

PAGE

TAISNIÈRES-EN-TERACHE, AUGUST 16, 1914 . . . 12

LE COLONEL FAMÉCHON 92

DOCTEUR DEBU, CHIRURGIEN-EN-CHEF, HÔPITAL CIVIL, CAMBRAI 98

L'HÔPITAL "106" 126

M. VAMPOUILLE IN THE SALLE CINQ 130

GENERAL OBERARZT SCHMIDT, KÖNIGLICHE ERSTE BAYRISCHE RESERVE CORPS 146

TAKEN AT L'HÔPITAL, NOTRE DAME, CAMBRAI, OCTOBER 1914 156

GERMANY AT HOME! A MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL STAFF AT CAMBRAI 158

FOUNDLINGS FROM LA BASSÉE 168
PHOTO TAKEN AT CAMBRAI

BRITISH SOLDIERS AT THE "106" 174

A WARD AT THE "106" 188

M. LE VICAIRE-GÉNÉRAL 192

FESTUNG MARIENBERG 238

THE COURTYARD AND CHAPEL, FESTUNG MARIENBERG 244

FESTUNG MARIENBERG — ENTRANCE TO INNER COURTYARD 292

Wounded and a Prisoner of War

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST TEN DAYS

ALREADY on the shore side the skyline showed oddly-shaped shadows growing grey in the first movement of dawn. From the quay a single lamp threw its scarce light on the careful evolutions of the ship, and from the darkness beyond a voice roared in the still night instructing the pilot with inappropriate oaths and words not known to respectable dictionaries. There is not much room to spare for a troop-ship to turn in the narrow harbour, and by the time we got alongside the night was past.

The few pedestrians abroad in the streets of Boulogne at this early hour stood watching what must to them have seemed a strange procession. As the pipes were heard all down the steep, narrow street, there was a head at every window, and

much waving of flags and cheering—"Vive l'Angleterre!"

The way through the town is long and steep. The sun made its heat felt as we neared the top of the hill and passed long lines of market carts waiting for examination outside the Bureau de l'Octroi. Half a mile farther on, beyond the last few straggling houses, there is a signpost pointing to the Camp St. Martin. Here, in a large field, to the left of the road, stood four lines of tents of the familiar pattern. The ground was fresh and clean, for we were first in the field. From the Camp St. Martin a beautiful view is obtained over the sea, whence the breeze is always refreshing even on the hottest morning of the summer.

The country round Boulogne is steeply undulating pasture-land, hedged and timbered like a typical English countryside. From the Camp St. Martin the lighthouse of Etaples can be seen, a white splash where the coast-line disappears over the horizon; and on such a day as this, when the haze of the sun's heat makes all distant objects indistinct, even the most powerful lens will not show more of the English coast than just a shadow that mixes with the blur of sea and sky.

The streets of Boulogne were busy all that day with marching troops. At the quayside, transports arrived from hour to hour and unloaded their unusual cargo. From a point on the shore where

Lyon and I were bathing close to the harbour entrance, we could see far out to sea a large ship, escorted by a destroyer. As the ship came nearer, her three decks appeared black with innumerable dots as if covered by an enormous swarm of bees, and when she passed the narrow entrance of the harbour we could see the khaki uniform and hear the sound of cheering. Cheering crowds lined the passage of our troops, but it seemed to me that the people showed little agitation or excitement, and that anxiety was the prevailing sentiment.

News from the front there was none. No one knew where the front was. The "Evening Paper," a single sheet, printed in large characters on one side only, confined itself to recording that Liége still held out, and that General French had gone to Paris.

The battalion paraded at 10 A.M. next morning at the Camp St. Martin for inspection by a French General. In all armies the ritual of inspection is much the same, but on this occasion the ceremony had a special interest from the fact that never before in history had a British regiment been inspected by a French General on the soil of France. The General was accompanied by two French Staff Officers, one of whom was acting as interpreter, and from the scrap of talk which reached my ear as they went past, it seemed that conversation was proceeding with difficulty. "En

hiver ça doit être terriblement froid," remarked the General. "Demandez leur donc"—this to the interpreter—"si les hommes portent des culottes en hiver"!

Leaving St. Martin's Camp late on Sunday evening, entraining in the dark at Boulogne, the long day in the heavy, slow-moving train before we reached our detraining station at Aulnois, were experiences which then held all the interest and excitement of novelty. From Aulnois to the village of Taisnières-en-Terache is a pleasant walk of an hour through a country of high hedges enclosing orchards and heavy pasture-land. The sunlight was already fading as we left the station, and when at last our journey's end was reached it was pitch dark.

M. le Maire had plenty of straw, the accommodation was sufficient, and billeting arrangements were soon completed.

Our host, a fine-looking old man, tall and broad with large limbs, abnormally large hands, and something of a Scotch shrewdness in the look of his eye, had served in 1870 in a regiment of Cuirassiers, and showed us the Commemoration medal which had been granted recently by the French Government to survivors of the campaign. We sat down in his parlour about nine o'clock to a very welcome meal, and at the conclusion various toasts were drunk in the very excellent wine of

TAISNIÈRES-EN-TERACHE
AUGUST 16, 1914

which our host had provided a bottle apiece for us.

A sentry stood on the road outside the farmyard gate, where, fortunately, there was not much chance of his getting anything to do. His orders were to challenge any party that might come along the road, and not to let them proceed unless they could show the necessary pass. These passes were issued at the Mairie to all the inhabitants of the commune, and no one was allowed out after dark except for a definite purpose and at a stated hour which was to be marked on the pass. So it was fortunate that no one did pass along that night, as a nocturnal interview between our bewildered sentry and a belated French pedestrian would undoubtedly have aroused the whole company, and I might have been hauled out of bed in the early hours of morning to act as interpreter.

The next day, the 17th, Trotter and I were ordered to go off to St. Hilaire, about ten miles distant, to arrange billets for the battalion. We started off on horseback in the cool of the morning, glad of the chance to see something of the country and to escape the daily dusty route-march.

St. Hilaire is a picturesque village situated on the side of a hill overlooking a large tract of country, with a fine view of Avesnes, the *chef lieu d'arrondissement.* In the absence of the Maire the selection of billets was rendered very difficult, as many of the principal houses in the village were locked

up, and no one could tell us if they would be available. After much perspiring and chattering in the hot sun, the distribution of accommodation for men and horses and the chalking up of numbers at every house was finally accomplished, in spite of the fact that at each house-door stood a generous citizen who insisted on our drinking mutual healths in cider, beer, and curious liqueurs.

By the time we reached Taisnières it was getting dark, and we were held up on the outskirts of the village by a sentry belonging to the Royal Scots, who would not let us in without the password. Neither of us had the least idea what it was, and the situation was saved by the appearance of a N.C.O., who at once let us through.

On reporting at headquarters we found that orders had been changed, and our destination was to be not St. Hilaire after all, but a village farther north called St. Aubin. And so the day's work was wasted.

At St. Aubin there was no difficulty about billets. The Maire had everything made ready, so that when the battalion arrived, tired and hungry after an early start and a dusty ten-mile walk, it was not long before dinners were cooking in the farmyards, and much scrubbing and cleaning of equipment was in progress all down the village street.

The money for paying out the troops had been sent in 20-franc notes, presumably through some

error on the part of the paymaster, so that the notes had to be taken to the nearest bank and exchanged for the newly issued 5-franc notes. The adjutant asked me to get a conveyance of some kind in the village, and to proceed to Avesnes, where the Sous-préfet, who had been warned of my arrival, would give all facilities for changing the money. A large bag of English silver which had been collected from the men was also to be taken that it might be exchanged for French money. A fat innkeeper offered to drive me into Avesnes, and after many delays and much conversation our "equipage" was ready. Captain Picton-Warlow, who had appointed himself escort to the expedition, looked with some dismay at the dilapidated conveyance. The horse was of the heavy-jointed, heavy-bellied variety that seems always to go more slowly than any living thing. The cart is hard to describe, although of a kind not easy to forget once one had been in it for a drive. The body, shaped like a half-circle balanced on springs, was supposed to hold three people. The equilibrium, we found, was maintained by the passengers accommodating their position to the slope of the road. The driver addressed the horse as "Cocotte," and we were off, creating much amusement through the village—Picton-Warlow, big and tall, perched up alongside the driver, trying with some appearance of dignity to maintain his balance and that of the cart.

Seven kilometres is more than four miles and less than five, and although that is the distance from St. Aubin to Avesnes, we managed to spend over an hour on the road. Cocotte, being weak in the forelegs, was not allowed to trot downhill, and could not be expected to do more than crawl uphill with "trois grands gaillards comme nous sommes," said our conductor. On level ground we advanced ("elle fait du chemin quand même cette pauvre bête") at a cumbersome trot. An endeavour to get more speed out of the driver by explaining that we had to be in Avesnes in time to change some money before the banks closed met with no success. "The banks at Avesnes have been closed for three days," said he; but if the Messieurs wanted change, what need to go so far as Avesnes when he himself was able and willing to provide "la monnaie" for a hundred, two hundred, even a thousand francs. However, we required far more than our good friend could supply, and besides, there was the expectant Sous-préfet, who should not be disappointed, so on we jogged. Avesnes came in sight long before we got there, as the town lies in a valley. Our horse and driver, equally frightened at the steepness of the hill, proceeded with exasperating caution. Halfway down the hill tramcars and slippery pavements reduced our rate of progress still further, until the jogging of the strangely balanced cart turned into a soothing rhythmic sweep from side to side.

"Halte! Qui vive!" Our challenger, *un brave père de famille de l'armée territoriale,* would not let us pass without a long gossip, his interest being chiefly centred in "le kilt." The horse having been wakened up, we proceeded at a decorous pace through the town and stopped outside the Café de la Paix. On the way through the streets we had attracted a certain amount of attention, and as we neared the café the nucleus of a fair-sized procession began to accumulate. After our descent from the cart the procession became a rapidly swelling crowd. Telling our driver to remain at the café to wait orders, I asked where the Sous-préfet could be found. Monsieur le Sous-préfet was not at his bureau, "mais à la Sous-préfecture en haut de la ville; nous allons vous y conduire tout de suite." And up the street we all went, Picton-Warlow most embarrassed and suggesting schemes for the dispersal of the crowd.

The Sous-préfecture, on top of the hill, is a large comfortable-looking villa, surrounded by quite a large garden, palm-trees, and flower-beds, with an imposing stone entrance-gate. Opposite the gateway is an open square, behind us were the curious crowds of Avesnois. In front, to our astonishment, the road was blocked, and two sides of the square filled up by a whole brigade of the British troops. A hurried consultation with Picton-Warlow as to our next move allowed time for the crowd

behind to form up on the remaining side of the square in the evident expectation of some interesting military ceremonial. The entrance to the Sous-préfet's house was guarded by an officer de gendarmerie on a black horse. We advanced towards this official, and after mutual salutes requested to see the Sous-préfet. "M. le Sous-préfet was receiving the generals, but would be quite ready to receive us too." As there was no other way of escaping from the crowd except through the gateway, we marched off up to the house, determined to explain the situation to the servant who opened the door, and ask leave to wait until the Sous-préfet should be disengaged. The door was opened by a servant *en habit noir,* behind him on a table in the hall we could see caps with red tabs and gold lace. "It is about time we were out of this," said Picton-Warlow. The domestic in evening clothes, doubtless thinking we were some kind of generals, said in answer to our request to be allowed to wait that we would be shown in at once. It was useless to explain that this was precisely what we wanted to avoid, and as I could get nothing out of the stupid man but "ces messieurs sont là qui vous attendent," we determined to beat a retreat. However, the obtuse domestic was equally determined that we should not escape. On the right side of the hall in which we stood were two large folding doors. Suddenly, and after the manner of Eastern

fairy tales, these huge panelled doors were flung open. The servant had disappeared and we two stood alone, unannounced, on the threshold of a large drawing-room where "ces messieurs" were sitting in conclave. For an instant we stood speechless and motionless, taking in at a glance Madame la Sous-préfete in evening dress seated at the far end of the room, on her right General M., on the other side a brigade-major, two French officers of high rank, and a whole lot of Frenchmen in evening dress with decorations and ribbons, all seated on chairs in a circle, a very small fragile Louis XV. table in the middle. The sudden appearance in the doorway of a kilted subaltern with two money bags slung over his shoulder did not seem to astonish the assembled company, with the exception of General M. and his brigade-major. I looked round for some one to apologise to for our intrusion, and was about to make a polite speech to the lady in evening dress, when a gentleman dressed in black silk, slim and courteous, advanced into the middle of the room. It was M. le Sous-préfet. In the name of France, in the name of the Republic and of the Town Council and citizens of Avesnes, he welcomed us. He went on at some length, dignified as only a Frenchman can be, and most flattering. I began to feel like an ambassador. When the address was completed, I replied to the best of my ability in the same strain, expressing our devotion, &c., to France,

the Republic, Avesnes, and our consciousness of the great honour that was being done to us, ending up with an apology for intrusion upon their deliberations, and proposing to retire to the place whence we had come.

But the Sous-préfet would not hear of our leaving; "Quand Messieurs les Ecossais viennent à Avesnes il faut boire le champagne." With these words he led me forward, Picton-Warlow following reluctantly in the rear, and introduced us to Mme. la Sous-préfete. Picton-Warlow, after shaking hands with the gracious lady, took refuge on a chair next the brigade-major, while I was taken to the other end of the circle and introduced to M. le Maire. The money-bags had escaped notice, and I was glad to get rid of them by placing them under my chair. The circle broken by our unexpected arrival now re-formed, and as we sat waiting for the champagne, I was informed by my neighbour the Maire that the gentlemen in evening dress were members of the Conseil Municipal of Avesnes who had been summoned by the Sous-préfet to do honour to General M., whose brigade was to billet in or near the town. Not many minutes passed before the champagne arrived, ready poured out, the glasses carried in on a large tray by the daughter of the house, a self-possessed young lady of perhaps fourteen years of age. Close behind followed a younger brother in bare legs, short socks, and black knickerbocker suit,

carrying a dish of cakes and biscuits. With a glass of champagne in each hand, our host crossed over to General M. and pledged a lengthy toast in somewhat similar style to the speech which had been made to me. "I drink," said he, "to the most noble and the most brave, as well as the most celebrated of British Generals." During the delivery of the address General M. looked most uncomfortable, especially when his qualifications and qualities were being enumerated; in reply, he made a very gracious bow to the Sous-préfet, and we sipped healths all round. After the champagne had been drunk the party became more animated, and formed into groups, in each of which was a distinguished guest struggling with unreasonable French genders, and I was presently able to explain quietly to our host the motive of our visit. M. le Sous-préfet had never had any word of such an errand; he said that the banks would be shut for another week, but suggested that the Receveur des Impôts would be able to provide such change as might be required. Meantime Picton-Warlow had been talking to the Brigadier, who had by now realised and was most amused at the situation. When we got up to bid our adieux, I heard the General say—*sotto voce*—to Picton-Warlow, "For God's sake don't go off and leave us here alone." When I turned round at the door and saluted the assembly there was a distinct twinkle in M.'s eye, and I think the Sous-

préfet was not without some slight quiver of the eyelid as he bade us a cordial farewell.

The "Bureau du Receveur" was open, but there was no one about save the caretaker, who informed us that the "patron" had gone off with all his clerks "to see the English march round the town." We directed our steps towards the swelling sound of pipe-and-drum band, and mingled with the crowd lining the main boulevard which encircles the upper part of the town. P. W. made friends with a French soldier who was in charge of a motor-car which was held up within the barrier formed by the circular manœuvre of the Brigade. It appeared from what this man said that the citizens of Avesnes had made great preparations to welcome the men, and that they were so disappointed on hearing that the troops were under orders to march farther north that General M., at the Sous-préfet's request, promised to march his men three times round the town. The whole population had turned out to witness the parade, and there did not seem to be much chance of retrieving the Receveur des Impôts from among the enthusiastic cheering mob that swelled around. Our new-found friend, the French soldier, now took us under his wing. He set a number of his friends to hunt down the line, and several civilians joined in the search, among whom was our burly driver, who had got tired of waiting for us at the café. As we were now seated

in the motor-car, and had accepted the owner's kind offer to drive us back to St. Aubin, we told our fat driver that his services and that of the horse and cart would not be required. Some one then came running up to say that M. le Receveur des Impôts had been found and was now at the Bureau.

The business of changing the French notes was soon carried through, but the English silver could not be changed, as the rate of exchange was a matter on which discussion might have lasted the whole afternoon.

When M.'s Brigade had finished their last lap we in the motor-car were then able to proceed with our commissions. The first stop was at the chemist's. Picton-Warlow stayed in the car. The chemist greeted me as an old friend, and I presently recognised him to be one of the gentlemen who in evening dress had taken part in the reception at the Sous-préfecture. He was now standing at the back of his shop in the middle of a group of stout, middle-aged, and severely respectable-looking citizens, to whom he was telling the story of the day's adventure. After my arrival the conversation came gradually round to a discussion of the Entente Cordiale, and the alliance Franco-Ecossaise, until I felt that a request to purchase tooth-paste would be almost an indiscretion.

Outside, a crowd had again collected, and Picton-Warlow, sitting unprotected in the back of the

car, was an object of respectful yet insistent curiosity. Here was a chance to see "le kilt" at close quarters. The good citizens (and citizenesses too) climbed on to and into the car to see and feel "les jambes nues! mais en hiver ça doit être terrible!"

Picton-Warlow refused to sit in the car at our next stop, and so we went together into "Le Grand Bazar." "Avez-vous des plumes, de l'encre, et du papier à écrire?" "Mais ou, Monsieur, on va vous faire voir cela tout de suite." And we were led round the shop to inspect the trays wherein it is the custom of bazaars to display their stock.

Simple-minded inhabitants of a wild and mountainous region (les Hig-landerrs) are no doubt unaccustomed to the splendour of bazaars, so the shop-girls watched with expectant interest. Picton-Warlow selected the best shaving-brush (this for the Adjutant, whose kit had got lost) out of a tray of very second-rate brushes with nothing of the "Blaireau" about them except the name. "Tiens," said one of the girls, nudging another, "Il s'y connait, le grand! Il a pris le meilleur du premier coup!" "Mais parle donc pas si fort, je te dis que 'l'autre' comprend." While "le grand" was making his purchases, a French reservist, the only other customer in the shop, looked on with absorbing interest. The *brave poilu* could no longer contain his curiosity, and began to follow "le grand," pretending to take an interest in the pens, ink, and paper. Just as "le grand"

was choosing an indelible pencil, the *poilu* ventured to stretch out a hand and feel the texture of his kilt. "Mais comme ils doivent avoir froid en hiver! Les jambes nues," he said, addressing me; and then as "le grand" turned round, "Pardon, quel rang?" "Capitaine," said I in a solemn voice. The *poilu* in horror stepped back a pace, saluted "le grand." "Pardon, mon capitaine, je ne savais pas." "L'autre qui comprend," then explained the significance of stars and stripes, and with great difficulty persuaded the abashed and no longer curious soldier that we were not in the least offended at his unintentional breach of discipline.

We had to drive up to the barracks in order that our driver could get his *permis de rentrée,* and, refusing with regret the hospitality of the officer in charge, we started off for St. Aubin, arriving back in time to pay out before night had fallen. Before turning in I went down to the end of the village to settle up with the fat innkeeper; we had a farewell drink of wine, and I paid him five francs, his own price, for the hire of Cocotte and the carriole.

The five officers of D Company were billeted alongside H.Q., who were in the big house. Our tiny cottage consisted of two small rooms adjoining the kitchen, inhabited by an old couple, who, when I came in that evening, were sitting silently over the dying embers of the kitchen fire. The picture of the old man, small of stature and wizened

in features, and very poor, is still vivid in my mind. Life had left its mark most distinctly upon him. One could see how from early morning to late at night he had from childhood toiled over the hard earth which had drawn him down, until now his back was bent as if still at labour, even when at rest by the fireside. The two did not speak when I came in, but sat watching the fire. No other light was in the room. An occasional flicker from the hearth lit up the walls of brown-coloured plaster, the clean but badly-laid tiles, an old cupboard of polished walnut, the kitchen table, also old, and black from smoke and much polishing. I asked the old man if he would wake me at four. "Mais oui, Monsieur," he replied, "nous nous coucherons pas, nous autres, nous restons pour garder le feu, et si vous voulez de l'eau chaude demain matin on vous en donnera."

These good Samaritans had provided beds for the five of us, and they were to sit up and watch the fire.

The bedroom next the kitchen contained no furniture save the four beds, each of which was provided with a straw mattress, but no sheets or blankets. Captain Lumsden occupied a tiny room at the back—so small that it was more cupboard than a room. It was here that the old people slept. The bed, which took up nearly the whole space, was covered with clean white sheets and an eider-down

quilt, very new looking, as if they were used only on special occasions. Lumsden would have spread his valise on the floor had there been room, as the bed was at least a foot too short for his long limbs.

About an hour before dawn the old man came in with a jug of hot water and a stump of candle. After a very rapid shave, I hurried out into the darkness with a little Chinese lantern bought at the Grand Bazar.

We messed with H.Q. at the auberge just opposite, and thither I went as assistant P.M.C. to make sure breakfast would be ready. The oil-lamps were lit in the long low room, and hot *café au lait,* with round loaves of bread and *fromage de Marolles,* had been laid on the table. A large dish of steaming bacon came over from the cook's fire, which was in the orchard behind H.Q. This was the last substantial breakfast that any of us were to get for many a long day.

All the marching had so far been done along pleasant country roads through a country of hedges and orchards, very like central and southern England. But the aspect changed when, shortly after leaving St. Aubin, we reached the Route Nationale. The battalion wheeled to the left, and we were marching down one of the *chaussées pavées* which are a special feature of Belgium and Northern France. The *chaussée,* or centre of the road, is paved with large uneven cobbles, on a width of

eight to ten yards. On each side of the paved roadway a macadamised surface, about three yards broad, slopes away at a steep camber to the well-kept grass *accôtement,* which would be very nice to walk on were it not for the narrow channels every twenty or thirty yards draining to the deep, clean ditch, which runs outside the line of beautiful trees that flank both sides of the road.

We marched straight through the town of Maubeuge, which was full of French soldiers of the Territorial Reserve. The pavement in the town is atrocious, and made my feet sore; the sun was hotter than ever; the dust, being now largely coal-dust, was more unpleasant than before. We halted for a few minutes just beyond the bridge over the railway, where British troops were unloading guns from long lines of trucks. When I turned from watching the station I found that my platoon had got mixed up with a lot of Franch reservists, and that an unofficial and very dangerous rifle inspection was taking place, which was fortunately cut short by the order to "Fall in" coming down from the head of the column.

Shortly after crossing the railway the road turns sharply to the right, past an antiquated bastion, reminiscent of Vauban; by the roadside is a finger-post pointing to Belgium. What we saw on rounding the corner was strange, and at first inexplicable: it was as if a tornado had visited the spot. Where

a row of cottages had been was now a shapeless mass of ruins. The ground was covered with huge trees lying across each other, the branches fresh and green, the roots broken and torn as if by some high explosive. The French had been clearing a field of fire. Beyond the entanglement of the fallen trees a network of barbed wire was being laid on a depth of some two hundred yards.

About two miles out of the town we passed the trench, of which rumour had reached us at our first billets. At Taisnières we had heard that 15,000 people were digging trenches in front of Maubeuge! The trench, deep and broad, stretched away on both sides of the road as far as the eye could see, and probably encircled the whole of Maubeuge. The road itself was blocked by barbed-wire entanglements, a space being left in the middle wide enough for the passage of a single cart. In a wood some few hundred yards behind the line of defence was a very cleverly-hidden field fortification, in which, no doubt, some of the famous 75 mm. guns were concealed.

All along the road for a distance of several miles men were working hard to clear a field of fire, hacking off branches, cutting off the tops of trees and blowing some up by the roots. A field telephone along the roadside connected these working parties with the observation officer of the battery.

At 2.15, tired, hot and hungry, we entered Joigny

la Chaussée, a long straggling village, one side of the road in Belgium, the other in France.

Dinner was a very poor affair that evening—thin, watery soup with slices of bread soaked, omelette stiffened with some ration bacon.

Next morning, while we were having breakfast of café au lait and partly developed omelette, our hostess bewailed lugubriously the prospect of a German invasion, thus showing in the light of subsequent events that she appreciated the military situation far better than we did. "Ils vont tout piller, tout prendre de ce que nous avons, ces sauvages!"

On leaving Joigny la Chaussée we were back again on the highroad, forming part of a long column which was moving in the direction of Mons, distant some ten to twelve miles. Our enemies that morning, just as on the previous day, were dust, cobble-stones, and the sun.

Shortly before midday the battalion halted at a level crossing on the outskirts of Mons, and then turned to the left down a side road which runs along the railway line, opposite a small station. The rest of the column marched on over the railway and through the town.

We spent most of the afternoon waiting by the roadside; the men sat down, some on the road, some in the ditch on the railway side, all thirsty, hot, and hungry. The inhabitants of the locality, a strag-

gling suburb, brought along some loaves and cheese, which did not, however, go far among so many. Then came a woman with two jugs of what looked like wine and water. The first man to reach her, instead of drinking the stuff, washed his mouth with it and spat on to the road, and all those who followed did the same. "They do not seem to like it," said the woman as she passed me with the empty jugs. "C'est pourtant très rafraîchissant, de l'eau sucrée avec un peu de menthe." Peppermint-water does not suit the Scotch palate!

Captain Lumsden and I went off to search for an estaminet to try to get something to eat, and we had not far to go. But the new-found estaminet did not lay itself out to supply anything but thin beer and short drinks. However, we got two pork cutlets and some eggs, and were sitting half-way through this welcome meal when A—— M——, with some other officers, having discovered our retreat, entered and ordered lunch, but with little success. The two pork cutlets and six fried eggs had apparently exhausted the resources of the establishment, and the new-comers had to content themselves with bread and butter, Dutch cheese, and the thin mixture, yellow in colour, slightly bitter to taste, which in this misguided locality is called beer.

On getting back to the road we found that most of the officers had settled down to sleep in the ditch

on one side of the road, and most of the men followed their example on the other.

Train-loads of refugees, mostly women and children, were continually passing through the station.

It was nearly four o'clock when at last the order came to fall in. We marched back past the level-crossing and followed the railway line for a short way along a narrow paved road leading to the little village of Hyon, situated on a hill immediately to the right of Mons, where the Château de Hyon overlooks the plains and stands out distinctly in the picturesque landscape.

The sun had not long set when the men were settled down in billets, and cooking-pots stood smoking in the village street, where the afterglow of sunset still held off the twilight.

Through the still air came the hum of an aeroplane, which soon was floating over the village, about 2000 feet above our heads, spying out our position—unmolested and unafraid, the first German Taube!

II

"From the Camp before MONS,
September 26.

COMRADE,

I received yours and am glad yourself and your wife are in good health. . . . Our battalion suffered more than I could wish in the action. . . . I have received a very bad shot in the head myself, but am in hopes, and please God, I shall recover. I will not

pretend to give you an account of the battle, knowing you have better in the prints. . . .

Your assured friend and comrade,

JOHN HULL."

Quoted in the *Tatler*, Oct. 29, 1709.

The war of 1914 is in many ways an illustration of Alison's remark that battle-grounds have a tendency to repeat themselves, for to a student of Marlborough's campaigns the whole battle-line of Flanders is familiar. In 1709 the confederate armies, British, Dutch, Prussian, under Marlborough, numbering about 95,000 strong, succeeded by rapid marches in cutting off Mons from the French who were marching to its relief. After a most sanguinary battle, which took place on the 11th September, the French were forced to retire.

Between 1709 and 1914 no military comparison is possible owing to the new factors which have entered into the operations of war. Moreover, in 1709 the opposing forces were approximately equal. Still it is interesting to note that in 1709 the French, although beaten and compelled to retire, suffered less, owing to the strength of their position, than the confederate army, and that the French retreat from Mons was accomplished in perfect order.

The aspect of the country stretching northwards beyond the village and woods of Hyon is probably much the same to-day as when Marlborough's troops

camped there in the autumn of 1709. From the dominating woods of Hyon the ground slopes very gradually, and is divided into irregular plots of cultivated ground, groups of farm buildings, and patches of woodlands; farther down the valley away to the right are some considerable villages; near at hand on the left lies the town of Mons, partly hidden from view by a piece of rising ground.

On leaving billets at Hyon on Sunday, 23rd August, each company marched out with separate orders to take up the position to which it had been detailed the night before, and it was about 6 A.M. when D company reached the appointed spot on the main road from Mons. There had been rain in the night; the sun was already high, but as yet no summer haze impeded the distant view. Vainly did field-glasses explore the country for some sign of the enemy, and we little imagined that through the far distant woods the Huns were once more descending upon the Hainault. We, resting in the shade of the long avenue of trees, had not yet realised the imminence of great events.

In the days of peace, when soldiering was mostly confined to a manœuvring space on some open heath, and the route-march along the King's highway, the word "battlefield" had lost its meaning, and was a contradiction in terms in its literal sense. Fields were always "out of bounds." Since landing in France we had not yet lost the fear of cultivated

ground, and at every halting-place precautions were taken to prevent troops straying off the highway; and when in billets, entrance into orchards, gardens, and fields surrounding the village was strictly forbidden. We had marched along many miles of long straight dusty road between the pleasant trees, and halted many times by a roadside such as this, when nothing but a shallow ditch and the conventions of soldiering in peace time prevented our entry into potential battlefields. The word of command to fall in had for so many years been followed inevitably by a simple "quick march," and so on to the next halt.

Now, with the command *"left wheel,* quick march," we left the straight road and entered the cultivated fields, marching across a piece of bare stubble, then over some thickly growing beetroot still wet with dew, and again without hindrance, for there was no fence on all the land; across yet another plot of stubble up to the edge of a large cabbage patch, where two sticks were standing freshly cut, and stuck into the ground as if to mark the stand for guns at a cover shoot.

In front the unencumbered ground, cultivated in narrow strips, sloped evenly down to a main road which crossed our front diagonally, and formed an angle on the left, but out of sight, with the road we had just left. At this point the angle of the roads held by C Company on our left flank was

hidden from view by a piece of rising ground. On the right flank and at a lower level, No. 14 platoon had already started digging their trench in a stubble field: beyond this, and in the same line, was a plantation of tall trees, with thick undergrowth.

The Route Nationale, with its usual border of poplar-trees, cuts diagonally across the patchwork of roots, stubble, and meadow. The distance at its nearest point to our trench, which is now traced out on the edge of the cabbage field, is just about 400 yards; 50 yards farther down to the right, on the far side of the road, there is a large white house.

Beyond the road the fields carry a heavy crop of beetroot, but there is here no great width of cultivated land. The irregular border of the forest reaches in some places to within four or five hundred yards of the road, forming a barrier to the searching of a field-glass at 1000 yards from our position. Away to the right the valley opens out like a map, with villages dotted here and there among green plantations in the middle distance, and beyond a great rolling stretch of country looking to the naked eye like some large barren heath, but showing in the field-glass the patch-quilt effect of innumerable tiny strips of variegated cultivation.

On such a day as this, when the sun is shining in the distant valley, while thick clouds above shade and tone the light, one can see farther yet to where fields and woods and villages fade together in the

blue distance, with here and there a darker tone of shadow, and sometimes the sparkle of sunlight on a distant roof.

There was nothing in all the prospect to give the slightest hint of war. No traffic stirred down the straight avenue of poplars; distant patches of open country away to the right where the sun was shining remained still and deserted. Overhead the clouds had been gathering. The trench was nearly completed, when the rain came suddenly and with almost tropical force, blinding all view of the landscape.

I determined to pass away the time with a visit to the white house by the roadside, and at the same time get a look at our trench from what might soon be the enemy's point of view.

The village on the road and on our flank (half left) consisted of a dozen houses. Every house was shut up. The warm rain poured in torrents, and the village appeared to be deserted. I turned and walked slowly down the road towards the white house.

I can still see in my mind's eye the picture of this roadside inn as I saw it that morning, as none will ever see it again.

The house stood back a little from the road; two steps above the ground-level one entered the estaminet, a large airy room, a long table down the centre covered with a red-and-white check oilcloth.

Outside stood a number of iron tables and chairs on each side of a sanded level space for playing bowls or ninepins. Beyond this a garden, or rather series of rose bowers, each with its seat, a green patch of long grass in the centre, and high hedges on the side nearest the road, and on the side nearest the cultivated fields and the woods beyond. In one of the rose bowers in the garden I found a sentry peering through the hedge. I was struck with the air of conviction with which, in answer to my question, he said he had seen nothing. The tone showed how convinced he was that this was simply the old old game of morning manœuvres and finish at lunch-time.

In my own mind such an impression was fast fading. The barricaded silent village up the road had helped to create a sense of impending tragedy. But the mask of make-believe did not quite fall from my eyes until I met the woman of the estaminet, a woman who came out of the white house weeping and complaining aloud, with her children clinging to her skirt. Her words I have never forgotten, though at the time I did not realise the whole meaning they contained, nor that this woman's words were the protest of a nation.

The Germans were close at hand, she said, and would destroy everything. What was to be done, where was she to flee for safety? Her frightened, sobbing voice, and the frightened faces of the chil-

dren, these were, indeed, the first signs of war! I told her the truth that I knew nothing, and could give no advice as to whether it was safe to stay or flee, and as I left the tidy sanded garden and stepped on to the main road she raised her voice again with prophetic words: "What have we done, we poor people, 'paisible travailleurs'? What have we done that destruction should now fall upon our heads? Qu'est ce que nous avons fait de mal!"

The warm sunshine was pleasant after the rain. Not a sign of life on the long straight road. Four hundred yards away a soldier was still planting cabbages along the top of our parapet. I watched his work for a moment through my field-glasses, and then turned and looked across the road at the thick undergrowth beyond the cultivated ground. If the woman of the estaminet was right, even now those woods might conceal a German scout.

If at the time such a thought passed through my mind, it scarcely obtained a moment's consideration, so difficult it was then to realise the change that had already come upon the world. How incredible it is now that at the last moment of peace the prospect of real fighting could have still seemed so remote.

Somewhere hidden in the memory of all who have taken part in the war there is the remembrance of a moment which marked the first realisation of the great change—the moment when material common things took on in real earnest their military signifi-

cance, when, with the full comprehension of the mind, a wood became cover for the enemy, a house a possible machine-gun position, and every field a battlefield.

Such an awakening came to me when sitting on the roadside by the White Estaminet. The sound of a horse galloping and the sight of horse and rider, the sweat and mud and the tense face of the rider bending low by the horse's neck, bending as if to avoid bullets. The single rider, perhaps bearing a despatch, followed after a short space by a dozen cavalrymen, not galloping these, but trotting hard down the centre of the road, mud-stained, and also with tense faces. A voice crying out above the rattle of hoofs on the roadway: "Fall back and join H.Q."

Now that the sound of cavalry had passed away the road was quiet again. There was no stir around the white house, no peasants or children to see the soldiers, no stir in the fields and woods beyond.

Behind the closed shutters of the white house the tearful woman of the estaminet listened in terror to the sound of horses' hoofs, and crouched in the silence that followed. I returned slowly across the drenched fields filled with the new realisation that this trench of ours was "the front."

The trench, three feet deep and not much more than eighteen inches broad, formed a gradual curve thirty to forty yards in length, and sheltered three

sections of the platoon. The fourth section was entrenched on higher ground a hundred yards back, protecting our left flank.

At some distance to the rear stood a pile of faggots, which we laid out in a straight line and covered with a sprinkling of earth to form a dummy trench.

The dinners were served out and the dixies carried away, still in peace. The quiet fields and woods, with the sun now high in the heavens, seemed to contradict the idea of war. Searching round the edge of every wood, searching in turn each field and road, my field-glasses could find no sign of troops, and nothing disturbed the Sunday morning calm. Then, far away, a mile or more along the border of a wood, I saw the grey uniforms.

A small body of troops, not more than a platoon, showed up very badly against the dark background; even as I looked again they had disappeared among the trees. To the left of the white house, beyond the road and beyond the beetroot fields, the thick brushwood which skirts the cultivated ground becomes more open, and here the sun throws a gleam of light. Here, it seemed, were many shadows. At that moment German snipers, unknown to us, were already lying somewhere on the edge of the wood. The sound of bullets is most alarming when wholly unexpected. Those German scouts must have been using telescopic sights, for they managed to put a

couple of bullets between Sergeant Lee and myself. Still more unexpected and infinitely more terrifying was the tremendous explosion from *behind,* which knocked me into the bottom of the trench, for the moment paralysed with fright.

The battery behind the woods of Hyon had fired its first range-finding shell rather too low, and the shot ricochetted off a tree on the road behind our trenches.

The situation in front of the trenches had not yet changed, as far as one could see, since the first shot was fired. An occasional bullet still flicked by, evidently fired at very long range.

The corner house of the hamlet six to seven hundred yards to our left front was partly hidden from view by a hedge. The cover afforded by this house, the hedge and the ditch which ran alongside it, began to be a cause of anxiety. If the enemy succeeded in obtaining a footing either in the house itself or the ditch behind the hedge, our position would be enfiladed.

One of my men who had been peering over the trench through two cabbage stalks, proclaimed that he saw something crawling along behind this hedge. A prolonged inspection with the field-glasses revealed that the slow-moving, dark-grey body belonged to an old donkey carelessly and lazily grazing along the edge of the ditch. The section of my platoon who were in a small trench to our left rear,

being farther away and not provided with very good field-glasses, suddenly opened rapid fire on the hedge and the donkey disappeared from view. This little incident caused great amusement in my trench, the exploit of No. 4 section in successfully despatching the donkey was greeted with roars of laughter and cries of "Bravo the donkey killers," all of which helped to relieve the tension.

It was really the donkey that made the situation normal again. Just before there had been some look of anxiety in men's faces and much unnecessary crouching in the bottom of the trench. Now the men were smoking, watching the shells, arguing as to the height at which they burst over our heads, and scrambling for shrapnel bullets.

The German shells came in bunches; some burst over the road behind, others yet farther away crashed into the woods of Hyon. At the same time the rattle of one of our machine-guns on the left and the sound of rapid rifle fire from the same quarter showed that C Company had found a target, while as yet we peered over our trenches in vain. I will not pretend to give an account of the battle of Mons, "because you have better in the prints," and because my confused recollection of what took place during the rest of the afternoon will not permit of recounting in their due order even events which took place on our small part of the front. The noise of bursting shells, the sound of hard fighting on our

left, must have endured for nearly an hour before any attempt was made by the Germans, now swarming in the wood behind the white house, to leave cover and make an attack on our front. From the farthest point of the wood, at a range of 1200 yards, a large body of troops marched out into the open in column, moving across our front to our left flank, evidently for the purpose of reinforcing the attack on C Company.

At 1200 yards rifle fire, even at such a target, is practically useless. It was impossible to resist the temptation to open fire with the hope of breaking up the column formation and thus delaying the reinforcement operations. "No. 1 Section, at 1200 yards, three rounds rapid." I bent over the parapet, glasses fixed on the column. They were not quite clear of the wood and marching along as if on parade.

At the first volley the column halted, some of the men skipped into the wood, and most of them turned and faced in our direction. With the second and third volleys coming in rapid succession they rushed in a body for cover.

All our shots seemed to have gone too high and none found a billet, but the enemy made no further attempt to leave the wood in close formation, but presently advanced along the edge of the wood in single file, marching in the same direction as before, and affording no target at such a distance.

Various descriptions of the battle of Mons speak of the Germans advancing like grey clouds covering the earth, of "massed formation" moving across the open to within close range of our trenches, to be decimated by "murderous fire."

On every extended battle line incidents will occur affording opportunities for picturesque writing, but in the attack and defence of an open position in the days of pre-trench war, excepting always the noise of bursting shells, the hum of bullets and the absence of umpires, the whole affair is a passable imitation of a field-day in peace time.

Our position at Hyon, important because it dominated the line of retreat, was weakly held. We had practically no supports. The German superiority at that part of the line was probably about three to one in guns, and five or more to one in men.

The enemy attacked vigorously, met with an unexpectedly vigorous resistance, hesitated, failed to push their action home, and lost an opportunity which seldom occurred again—an opportunity which has now gone for ever.

With half the determination shown at Verdun the Germans could have captured our position with comparatively trifling loss, turned our flank, and disorganised the preparation for retreat.

The steady hammer of one of our machine-guns and a renewed burst of rapid fire from the rifles of C Company made it clear that an attack on the vil-

lage was in progress. Then the battery whose first shell had nearly dropped into our trench put their second shot neatly on to the red-tiled house at the left-hand corner of the village.

A shell bursting over a village! Who would pay attention now to such a detail when whole villages are blown into the air all along a thousand miles of battle?

Twenty feet above the red tiles a double flash like the twinkling of a great star, a graceful puff of smoke, soft and snow-white like cotton-wool. In that second the red tiles vanished and nothing of the roof remained but the bare rafters.

Now our guns were searching out the German artillery positions, and sent shell after shell far over our heads on to the distant woods; and now the German shells, outnumbering ours by two or three to one, were bursting all along the woods behind our trenches and behind the main road. The noise of what was after all a very mild bombardment seemed very terrible to our unaccustomed ears!

Still the rattle of a machine-gun on our left; but the bursts of rifle fire were less prolonged and at rarer intervals, so that the pressure of the German attack was apparently relaxing. The surprise of the day came from our right flank.

Here the main road ran across and away diagonally from our line, so that the amount of open ground in front of No. 14 Trench was consider-

ably nearer 600 than 400 yards—the whole distance from this trench to the road being bare pasture-land, with scarcely cover for a rabbit. No. 14 Trench extends to within a few yards of the thick plantation which runs almost parallel with our line. The cover is not much more than two or three acres in extent, and on the far side of the wood the line is carried on by another company.

I was on the point of laying down my glasses, having made a final sweep of the ground, including a look down to No. 14 Trench, when something caught my attention in the plantation, and at that same moment a body of troops in extended order dashed out of the woods and doubled across the open meadow. The sight of these men, coming apparently from behind our own line and making at such speed for the enemy, was so entirely unexpected that, although their uniforms even at the long range seemed unfamiliar, I did not realise they were Germans. A volley from No. 14 Trench put an end to uncertainty. The line broke, each man running for safety at headlong speed; here and there a man, dropping backwards, lay still on the grass.

In the centre of the line the officer, keeping rather behind the rest, stumbled and fell. The two men nearest him stopped, bent down to assist him, looking for a moment anxiously into his face as he lay back on the grass, then quickly turned and ran for cover. A very few seconds more and the remain-

ing racing figures dodged between trees on the main road and found safety.

When the rifle fire ceased, two or three of the grey bodies dotted about the field were seen to move; one or two rose up, staggered a few paces, only to fall at once and lie motionless; other two or three wriggled and crawled away; and one rose up apparently unhurt, running in zigzag fashion, dodging from side to side with sudden cunning, though no further shot was fired.

The German attack now began to press on both flanks—on the left perhaps with less vigour, but on the right an ever-increasing intensity of rifle fire seemed to come almost from behind our trenches; but on neither left nor right could anything be seen of the fighting. The ceaseless tapping of our two machine-guns was anxious hearing during that long afternoon, and in the confusion of bursting shells the sound of busy rifles seemed to be echoing on all sides.

Three German officers stepped out from the edge of the wood behind the white house; they stood out in the open, holding a map and discussing together the plan of attack. The little group seemed amazingly near in the mirror of my field-glass, but afforded too hopelessly small a target for rifle fire at a 1000 yards' range. The conference was, however, cut short by a shell from our faithful battery behind the wood of Hyon. A few minutes later,

the officers having skipped back into cover, a long line of the now familiar grey coats advanced slowly about ten yards from the wood and lay down in the beetroot field; an officer, slightly in front of his men, carrying a walking-stick and remaining standing until another shell threw him on to his face with the rest.

Our shells were bursting splendidly beyond the white house, with now and then a shell on what had once been the red-tiled corner house, and now and then a shell into the woods beyond where the German reserves were sheltering.

Two or three lines of supports issued forth from the wood, and the first line pushed close up to the white house; but as long as we could see to shoot, and while our shells were sprinkling the fields with shrapnel, the enemy failed to reach their objective and suffered heavy casualties.

After the sun had set the vigour of the fight was past, and in the twilight few shells were exchanged from wood to wood, although machine-guns still drummed and rifles cracked, keeping the enemy from further advance. And now, far in the distant valley—perhaps fifteen or twenty miles away—the smoke of exploding shells hung in white puffs on the horizon, and the red flame of fire showed here and there a burning village in the wake of the French Army.

General French had by now received the news

of the retreat from Charleroi, and the retreat of the British Army was in hasty preparation; but from us all such great doings were hidden.

Although it was now too dark for accurate shooting—for even the road and the white house were fading into the dusk—we had selected a certain number of outstanding marks easily seen in the twilight: a stump of a tree, a low bush, and a low white wall—points which the enemy would have to cross should they attempt to approach the house from the left flank. A remnant of the twilight remained when the Germans left the cover of the beetroot field, and with my field-glasses I could just manage to see when they passed in front of our prearranged targets, to see also the sudden hail of bullets spatter on the road and against the white wall among leaping, dodging shadows. On the right the machine-gun was silent for a space. In front dead silence round the familiar shadows of the white house. Then a voice broke out of the darkness, and a sound as of hammering on wooden doors. What followed, and what atrocious deed was committed in the night, none can ever surely tell.

The voice shouted again, "Frauen und Kinder heraus!" No description can convey the horror of this voice from the dark, the brutal bullying tone carrying to our ears an instant apprehension. More hammering, and then a woman's screams—the brutal voice and piercing screams as of women being

dragged along, and the French voice of a man loudly protesting, with always the hard staccato German words of command; then yet another louder shrieking, then three rifle-shots, and a long silence. A long silence, and never more in the night did we hear the man's protesting voice or the terrified shriek of women.

The silence was broken by leaping, crackling flames, and in an instant the white house was a roaring bonfire. Fiercely danced the flames, carrying high into the night their tribute to German efficiency!

During the long silence after the three shots, we had all seen with eyes straining through the darkness, how shadows were at work round the walls, and one shadow on the roof whose errand there was at first a mystery, but was quickly explained in the light of the great blaze which rose up instantaneously from a spark kindled in the darkness of the courtyard.

In the ring of light thrown by the blazing house, the trees on the roadside, the out-houses beyond the courtyard, and even, for a short way, the beetroot fields, showed vividly against the black arch of night. Here, on the fringe of light in uncertain mist of mingled smoke and darkness, it seemed as if men were grouped revelling over the night's work. Now that the roof had fallen in, clouds of smoke hung low over the fields and the red-hot glow gave little

light. Only every now and then a flame, shooting high into the thick darkness, threw a momentary gleam on a wider arch and showed the black shadows of men dodging back into the safety of the night.

The work was well and quickly done. The pleasant roadside inn where I had idly wandered in the morning was now a smouldering ruin.

There is no excuse for this ruin of a Belgian home. The burning was deliberate, and carried out with military precision under orders given by the officer in command, serving no conceivable military purpose, and prompted solely by a spirit of wanton destruction.

The story of the three shots in the dark will, perhaps, never be clearly told, but there can be little doubt—there is none in the minds of those who heard—that both the women and the man were brutally murdered.

Nearly a thousand years ago this same land was laid waste by the Huns, who left a memory that has lasted down to the hour of their return, for "it is in memory of the Huns," says an ancient chronicle, "that the province received the name of Hanonia or Hainault," a name which it retains to this day.

Again, after a thousand years, the Huns have risen and left a track in Europe for the memory of many generations.

CHAPTER II

THE RETREAT

CAPTAIN PICTON-WARLOW came up and whispered the order to retire. We had lain for many hours in front of our trench with bayonets fixed, expecting an attack at any moment, finding alarm in every shadow and fear in the rustling of night breezes.

There was safety for a time on the main road, and relief in the companionable formation of fours from the isolation and responsibility of trenches.

During the few moments' halt before marching down the road we heard how C Company had suffered heavy casualties. Major Simpson—reported mortally wounded. Lieut. Richmond—killed.

A few hundred yards down the road a machine-gun flashed red in the darkness; just before reaching it we turned down a side road to the right and joined on to the rest of the battalion. Here, by the roadside, close up against a grassy bank, a number of men were resting, some huddled up, others lying quite still. Almost at once the battalion moved on again, leaving the kilted figures by the roadside.

Less than an hour after leaving the main road

we halted on a steep hillside meadow. The order was given to lie down, and for the two or three hours of the remaining night the companies slept on the field in column of fours.

The sloping hillside where we had spent the night breaks at its crest and drops steeply down to the village of Nouvelle, and the rich pasture land with tall poplar-trees in ordered array. Beyond the ground rises suddenly, with patches of cultivation sloping up to the skyline in gentle undulations. Twenty yards below the crest of the hill, three hundred yards from a small plantation, two field-guns lay abandoned in the open. D Company, posted two hundred yards from the village, were scraping into some sort of cover by the roadside, when a well-timed shell burst right between the two guns, followed by half a dozen more along the ridge of the hill. The enemy was ranging the village, and soon two shells burst among the poplar-trees close to our "trenches," now six inches deep into the hard chalk rock.

We left the village just in time. Marching through the empty street between the shuttered houses I caught a glimpse of the two abandoned field-guns, and of a team of horses galloping along the ridge under the blazing shells. The guns were saved, but I never heard if the two gallant riders obtained recognition of their gallant deed.

For several miles our road ran alongside the railway and through open country. Pleasant in the

cool morning air, and peaceful until about 9 A.M., when the enemy began to shell the road from the wooded hills on our right flank. The battalion then crossed the railway, and two companies entrenched across a wide stretch of open pasture, facing the direction in which we had been marching, protected from the right to some extent by the railway embankment.

The enemy occupied a position among slag-heaps and factory chimneys about 4000 yards to our front, and as our own guns were only 200 yards behind, the noise of the artillery duel was prodigious. On this occasion the heavy guns from Maubeuge did very useful work. The big shells could actually be seen sailing along like monster torpedoes, and at each explosion among the slag-heaps an enormous cloud of dust rose into the air.

Our trenches possessed few of the desiderata carefully laid down in the Field Service pocket-book. The parapet was far from bullet-proof, the bright yellow clay against the green must have been visible for more than a mile, and the average depth of the trench was certainly not more than a foot. Shells were bursting here and there, sometimes far in front, now far behind, along the railway line and only occasionally over the trench, for the Huns had not yet succeeded in locating our battery. Probably they were somewhat disturbed by the "Jack Johnsons" from Maubeuge. At eleven o'clock our

guns retired and we followed suit, each platoon retiring independently. While No. 13 re-formed along a high wall surrounding the woods and garden of a small chateau about a quarter of a mile behind the trench, we had a narrow escape from disaster, as a shell landed just beyond the wall, killing two men and some horses.

We marched to Bavai without further incident, entering the town soon after dark. Here was all the confusion of retreat. Heavy motor-waggons, some French transport, staff officers' cars with blinding headlights, and vehicles of every description obstructed our progress through the town. I remember seeing a London taxi, one of the W.G.'s, loaded with ammunition-boxes.

A mile outside the town we turned into an orchard and bivouacked for the night, first dining on strong tea and a ration biscuit.

There was vigour and cheerfulness in the warm sunrise, and the battalion quickened its step and recovered its usual cheery spirit as we left the woods and entered the open country, marching down a narrow macadamised road, avoiding the horrors of the paved Route Nationale. Later on in the morning, one of the first duels between a British and a German aeroplane took place right over the road. The Taube, at about 4000 feet, was then following our march, having not yet observed, as we had, 7000 to 8000 feet up among the clouds, a tiny speck,

gradually growing bigger. Then the Taube took alarm and turned at full speed for the German lines. The speck, now seen to be a British aeroplane, dropped straight down to within a few hundred feet of the German machine, which was circling and dodging at various angles, striving in vain to escape. A puff of smoke from the British machine sent the enemy crashing to the ground.

Along the dusty road, marching in the hot sun with no knowledge of our destination or reason for such incessant toil, halting for short minutes, enough to ease the pack and rest the rifle and then on again, until the alternate marching and halting becomes the whole occupation not only of the body but of the mind—the eye finds no charm in pleasant countryside, and the mind gathers few pictures; the endless road, the choking dust, the unvaried pace in the hot sun.

On again through paved country towns where the hard stones are hot to weary feet, down to peaceful villages in fresh green valleys and up the long steep slope on the far side and again on, now across open country, now through the shade of green woods. Here by the village pond a pedestrian might well sit a while and smoke his pipe, watching the children paddle in the brown water under the shade of ancient trees. Often a glimpse through open doors showed cool tiled kitchens with peasants at the midday meal. Many shops in the village

street were closeed, with the reason therefor chalked across the shutters, "Fermé pour cause de Mobilisation." At the Mairie, and sometimes at street corners, large yellow posters, still fresh and clean, called reservists to arms in the name of La République.

We found many such towns and villages, with groups of men and women outside the numerous estaminets, offering bottles of beer and wine, or cigarettes; others with large buckets of wine and water. Glasses of wine and water were quickly seized, emptied in a few steps, handed back to some spectator farther down the line, and passed back again to the wine buckets.

There had been some thunder early in the afternoon, and overhead the storm-clouds were lowering.

Another long weary climb along the straight dusty road to reach a large open plateau, where an advance-guard of the 4th Division was entrenching, for during all that day of our long march the 4th Division was detraining, and part of this force took up a position north of Solesmes.

Large drops of rain were falling as we reached the crest of the hill, and soon a smart shower cleaned the road of dust, giving a new coolness to the air and a new vigour to the weary column.

After the long lonely road it was heartening to see the British troops, a mere handful of men, making ready against the vast armies of Germany,

whose advance-guard were now hard on our heels.

That afternoon and all that night the 4th Division, newly landed from England, fighting odds of at least ten to one, held off the German advance, and then rejoined the line of battle in the hours between midnight and dawn.

Many months later a prisoner at Würzburg, an officer of the King's Own (4th Division), told me a story of that night's battle. When leaving the village of Bethancourt, fighting every foot along the village street in the darkness of the night, with the Germans pouring in at the far side of the village, Lt. Irvine and Sergeant ——— entered a house where one of their men had been carried mortally wounded. They went to an upstairs room where the dying soldier had been carried. Irvine was at the foot of the stairs and Sergeant —— still busied with the wounded soldier, when a violent knocking was heard at the street door. Just as the door burst open and the Germans were pouring in and up the stairs, the Sergeant came unarmed out on to the landing. Sergeant —— was a big powerful man, who had held a heavy-weight boxing championship. Without a moment's hesitation he picked up a big sofa which happened to be close beside him on the landing and crashed it down on the head of the nearest German, breaking his neck and throwing those behind him into a confused mass at the foot of the stairs. Irvine emptied his revolver into the

struggling mass, the Sergeant dropped over the banisters, and both escaped unharmed through the back of the house. Sergeant —— was killed in the trenches next morning.

Now that the 4th Division lay between ourselves and the enemy, a halt was made on the slope of a long straight hill, and the cooks began to serve out dinner. It was half-past five. The rain poured heavily. Major Duff and I sat by the roadside comparing notes and searching for a solution of our continued retreat. We knew nothing then of von Kluck's attempt to outflank the French army.

For the first time since we had left Bavai a motor-car came down the road, making in the direction of the 4th Division, and going dead slow, as the tired men lying on both sides of the road left little enough space in the centre. The driver stopped and shared our wet seat on the bank. It was a strange meeting for the three of us. Now Duff and I sought information from this driver friend of ours, a distinguished member of the House of Commons, acting as Intelligence Officer, and this was the answer to our inquiry: "We are drawing the Germans on!"

Three or four shabby cottages and a whitewashed estaminet stand by the roadside on top of the hill, overlooking the valley of the Sambre.

A few miles farther on, where a road branches off from the main road to Cambrai, and curls down

the face of a steep hillside, Solesmes, hidden in the valley, shows the top of a church spire. The householders of Solesmes were putting up their shutters as we passed through the town, and less than an hour later shells were bursting over the pleasant valley.

Not many miles away to the left lies Landrecies, which R. L. Stevenson refers to, in "An Inland Voyage," as "a point in the great warfaring system of Europe which might on some future day be ranged about with cannon, smoke, and thunder." That evening the prophecy was fulfilled.

Caudry was reached at dusk, and here we heard the welcome news that our billets were close at hand. For two more miles along a narrow road, through the soaking rain, the battalion dragged slowly along. During the long twenty-five miles from Bavai to Caudry, the longest day of the retreat, very few men had fallen out; though all were weary through want of food and sleep, and many feet were blistered and bleeding, every man had kept his pack and greatcoat. The column slept that night crowded under the humble roofs of Audencourt.

. . . . . .

In the chill light of dawn trenches were being dug outside the village. The line to be held by the battalion extended as far as Caudry, and the position of No. 13 platoon was about half-way between

Audencourt and Caudry, close to a small square-shaped plantation. The rear of my platoon had just cleared the wood when a shell burst overhead, and we had the unpleasant experience of digging trenches under fire.

When at last we were under cover the shelling ceased, having caused no casualties at our end of the line, although some damage had been done up among the leading platoon, now entrenched about 500 yards to our left, their left resting on Caudry.

From information received long afterwards, the explanation of this early morning attack is as follows: German scouts had, on the previous evening, already located our position in the village of Audencourt, and a battery, placed behind Petit Caudry either during the night or very early in the morning, had ranged the little square-shaped wood from the map, and as soon as their observation man, who was probably in the church tower at Bethancourt, saw No. 13 platoon marching past the wood, he signalled to the guns to open fire. (These guns were almost at once driven away by the troops occupying the village of Caudry.)

The ground in front of our trenches slopes gently down to the Route Nationale Caudry—Le Cateau, which at this point runs on an embankment and is lined with fine old poplar-trees. This road was our first-range mark—350 yards.

Beyond the road the ground rises at a fairly steep slope to the village of Bethancourt.

At the edge of the village, on the ridge of the hill, the gate-post of a small paddock was our second-range mark—900 yards. Between the Route Nationale and the village the land is open pasture, so that no accurate ranges could be taken between 400 and 900 yards. The ridge of the hill runs at a slightly decreasing slope down to a small wood; on the right of this is a stubble field, and to the right again, on the far ridge of the hill, are beetroot fields through which a telephone wire runs, the range being 1200 yards. Caudry was on our left, with the houses of Petit Caudry just visible on our left front; on our right the village of Audencourt, with two platoons entrenched strongly. Behind lay open country, stretching back about 400 to 500 yards to the road between Caudry and Audencourt; again beyond that for at least half a mile open country interspersed with small thickets.

For nearly half an hour after the shelling ceased the countryside resumed its usual aspect. First the church tower of Bethancourt, then house by house, the village itself came into the full light of the rising sun, whose rays soon reached our newly dug trench to cheer us with their summer warmth. Captain Lumsden came along to supervise the clearing of a field of fire between our end of the line and the Route Nationale.

Our trench was dug in a stubble field where the corn had just been stooked, and it was now our business to push all the stooks over. This gave occasion for a great display of energy and excitement. When the stooks had been laid low we made a very poor attempt to disguise the newly thrown-up earth by covering the top of the trenches with straw, which only seemed to make our position more conspicuous than ever. The trench was lined with straw, and we cut seats and made various little improvements. Then our guns began to speak.

At the corner of the village of Bethancourt there stands (or stood that morning) a farmhouse. In the adjacent paddock two cows were peacefully browsing. The first shell burst right above them. They plunged and kicked and galloped about, but soon settled down again to graze. Several shells hit the church tower; the fifth or sixth set fire to a large square white house near the church on the right. Our gunners made good practice at the two cows, and shell after shell burst over or near their paddock, from which they finally escaped to gallop clumsily along the ridge of the hill and disappear into the wood, no doubt carrying bits of shrapnel along with them. For at least half an hour our guns had everything to themselves, and it must have been a most unpleasant half-hour for those who were on "the other side of the hill."

About 9 A.M. the German artillery got to work.

Many attempts have been made to describe the situation in a trench while an artillery duel is in progress, but really no words can give any idea of the intensity of confusion. On both our flanks machine-guns maintained a steady staccato. All other sounds were sudden and nerve-straining, especially the sudden rush of the large German shell followed by the roar of its explosion in the village of Audencourt, where dust and *débris* rise like smoke from a volcano, showing the enemy that the target has been hit.

The Huns evidently suspected that the little wood on our right rear is being used to conceal artillery, for they dropped dozens of shells into it, doing no harm to anything but the trees. The noise of the shells bursting among the branches just behind us was most disturbing. Sometimes these shells pitched short of the wood; they were then less noisy, but far more unpleasant in other respects. Just when the uproar was at its highest a scared face appeared over the back of my trench and stated that four ammunition boxes lay at the far corner of the wood at our disposal, please. The owner of the face, having delivered his message, rose up and returned whence he had come, doubled up yet running at great speed.

By about ten o'clock it became obvious that the artillery duel was not to be decided in our favour, and, moreover, that it would not as at Mons end

in a draw. I counted the number of shells going south and north; the proportion was about 7 to 1.

Gradually the number of our own shells grew less and less as our batteries were silenced or forced, or perhaps ordered, to retire. As this went on it became evident—far more evident than at Mons—that we were up against overwhelming odds. The rush of shells reached a maximum, and then for a space there was silence. Pipes and cigarettes, up to now smoked only by the fearless ones, for a short time appeared on every side, and conversational remarks were shouted from one trench to another. The respite was brief, and its explanation at once obvious when a Taube came sailing above our line considerably out of rifle-shot. It did not need great skill or experience in war to know what might now be expected. The aeroplane came over early in the afternoon, and less than half an hour after it disappeared the German artillery reopened fire.

This time the wood and the village were spared, for the Huns had silenced our guns and obtained exact knowledge of the position of our trenches, over which their shells now began to explode.

The German infantry first came into view crossing the beetroot fields on top of the hill on our right front, where the telegraph poles acted as the 1200 yards' mark. Through these fields they advanced in close formation until disturbed by the attentions

of a machine-gun either of ours or of the Royal Scots (who were holding the other side of the village of Audencourt). It was not long before we had a chance of getting rid of some ammunition. German troops, debouching from the little wood where the cows had taken refuge earlier in the day, now advanced across the stubble field on top of the hill, moving to their left flank across our front. My glasses showed they were extended to not more than two paces, keeping a very bad line, evidently very weary and marching in the hot sun with manifest disgust.

The command, "Five rounds rapid at the stubble field 900 yards," produced a cinematographic picture in my field-glasses. The Germans hopped into cover like rabbits. Some threw themselves flat behind the corn stooks, and when the firing ceased got up and bolted back to the wood. Two or three who had also appeared to fling themselves down, remained motionless.

The enemy, having discovered that we could be dangerous even at 900 yards, then successfully crossed the stubble field in two short rushes without losing a man, and reinforced their men who were advancing through the beetroot fields on our right.

Great numbers of troops now began to appear on the ridge between Bethancourt and the little wood. They advanced in three or four lines of sections of ten to fifteen men extended to two paces. Their

line of advance was direct on the village of Audencourt and on the low plateau on our right, so that we were able to pour upon them an enfilade fire. They were advancing in short rushes across pasture-land which provided no cover whatever, and they offered a clearly visible target even when lying down. Although our men were nearly all first-class shots, they did not often hit the target. This was owing to the unpleasant fact that the German gunners kept up a steady stream of shrapnel, which burst just in front of our trenches and broke over the top like a wave. Shooting at the advancing enemy had to be timed by the bursting shell.

We adopted the plan of firing two rounds and then ducking down at intervals, which were determined as far as could be arranged for by the arrival of the shell. But the shooting of the battalion was good enough to delay the enemy's advance. From the 900-yard mark they took more than an hour to reach their first objective, which was the Route Nationale, 400 yards from our nearest trench. Here they were able to concentrate in great numbers, as the road runs along an embankment behind which nothing but artillery could reach them. This was the situation on our front at about three o'clock in the afternoon. I happened to look down the line and saw Captain Lumsden looking rather anxiously to the rear. I then saw that a number of our people were retiring. There was not much time to

think about what this might mean as the enemy were beginning to cross the road; we had fixed bayonets, and I thought we would have little chance against the large number of Germans who had concentrated behind the embankment. For a long time, for nearly an hour, the British guns had been silent, but they had not all retired. With a white star-shaped flash two shells burst right over the road behind which the Germans were massed. Those two shells must have knocked out forty or fifty men. The enemy fled right back up the hill up to the 900-yard mark, followed by rapid fire and loud cheering from all along the line.

The Germans were now re-forming on the hill-side, and a machine-gun hidden in the village of Bethancourt began to play up and down our trench.

The bullets began to spray too close to my left ear, and laying my glasses on the parapet I was about to sit down for a few minutes' rest, and indeed had got half-way to the sitting position, when the machine-gun found its target.

Recollections of what passed through my mind at that moment is very clear. I knew instantly what had happened. The blow might have come from a sledge-hammer, except that it seemed to carry with it an impression of speed. I saw for one instant in my mind's eye the battlefield at which I had been gazing through my glasses the whole day. Then the vision was hidden by a scarlet circle,

and a voice said, "Mr. H. has got it." Through the red mist of the scarlet circle I looked at my watch (the movement to do so had begun in my mind before I was hit); it was spattered with blood; the hands showed five minutes to four. The voice which had spoken before said, "Mr. H. is killed."

Before losing consciousness, and almost at the same time as the bullet struck, the questioning thought was present in my mind as vividly as if spoken, "Is this the end?" and present also was the answer, "Not yet."

II

My knowledge of subsequent events is based partly on information obtained from Private, now Sergeant, R. Sinclair, who was next me in the trench, and at once bandaged up my head with his emergency field-dressing. It was still day when I came back to life. My first consciousness was of intolerable cramp in the legs. When Sinclair saw that I was breathing, he laid me down on the straw at the bottom of the trench and tried to give me a drink out of my water-bottle. I was unable to move any part of my body except the left hand, with which I patted the right-hand pocket of my coat, where I had carried, since leaving Plymouth, a flask of old brandy. Red Cross books say that brandy is the worst thing to give for head wounds;

but Sinclair poured the whole contents down my throat, and I believe the stimulant saved my life. I have been told that while I was unconscious Captain Lumsden came down the line to see what could be done for me. After drinking the contents of my flask, I remember sending him up a message to say I was feeling much better; and the answer came back, "Captain Lumsden says he is very glad indeed you are feeling better." Sinclair dug in under the parapet and made the trench more comfortable for me to lie in; shells were bursting overhead, and several times I was conscious that he was covering my face with his hand to protect me from the flying shrapnel. During the rest of the afternoon I had alternate periods of consciousness. I sent up another message asking how things were going, and the answer came back, "Captain Lumsden is killed."

When I next regained consciousness Sinclair told me that the enemy had again reached the Route Nationale. "But don't you worry, sir," he said, "we'll stick it all right; they won't come any farther."

Just after midnight the order came to retire.

Sinclair and the other occupants of the trench lifted me out, this operation coinciding with a fusillade from the enemy, who from their position on the road were firing volleys into the night—a great waste of ammunition. Still, the bullets must have been close overhead, for the men put me back into

the trench, jumped in after me, and waited till all was quiet.

The second attempt to get me out was more successful. I was laid on to a greatcoat and lifted up by six men. It is probably not easy to carry along such a burden in the dark, and they made a very bad job of it. Some one suggested that a substitute for a stretcher could be made with three rifles, and the suggestion was at once adopted with most painful results. I still remember the agony caused by the weight of my body pressing down on my neck and the small of the back, while my head, just clearing the ground, trailed among the wet beetroot leaves. The distance to the little wood was not great, but to me the journey seemed to take hours.

As the men struggled along with their awkward burden, shadowy forms of the retiring company passed close by in the pitch darkness of the night. "Lend a hand here, some of you chaps," said Sinclair; "here's a wounded officer. Come on, Ginger." Ginger, a big stout fellow, volunteered to carry me on his back, and asked me if I could hold on. He got me onto his back, and I held on with my left arm round his neck; but we did not go for more than a hundred yards or so—the dead-weight was too much for his strength—when the party came to a halt.

During the whole of that night I was only intermittently conscious of what was going on around

me. The only men I remember speaking to after I had been laid down are the Regimental Sergeant-Major and Lieutenant Houldsworth. The Regimental Sergeant-Major laid his mackintosh on the ground for me to lie on. To Houldsworth I said what a fine thing it was the men carrying me out of the trench; and he replied, "It is nothing at all, but very natural," or words to that effect.

My one fear at this time was to be left behind and taken prisoner, and the one hope, a very forlorn one, was that the battalion stretcher-bearers would be able to carry me away. But I heard some one in the dark say that there were no stretchers, and that orders had come to retire and leave all wounded.

There was shuffling about of men and whispered orders, then the not very distant tramp of marching along the road, a sound which grew fainter and fainter, till all in the night was silent: the battalion had gone.

After an indeterminate time—perhaps half an hour, perhaps an hour—I opened my eyes. I was not alone. Two kilted forms, indistinct and vaguely familiar, were seated on the ground close beside my head.

"Who are you?" I said, "and what are you doing here?"

"Macartney and Sinclair," replied the voice.

Macartney was the soldier who had acted as

servant for me since leaving Plymouth, but the name of Sinclair was not familiar. "Who is Sinclair?" I asked; and I remember the words of his reply: "The soldier, sir, who looked after you in the trench."

Each effort of speech and thought resulted in a short period of unconsciousness.

When I next recovered there was the sound on the road of marching men. Sinclair went off to find out who they were, and ask (vain and foolish hope it now seems) if they had stretchers or an ambulance!

He came back to say that two companies of the Royal Scots were marching down the road; they had no stretcher-bearers; the Major in command of the party, when he heard that Sinclair and Macartney remained behind, ordered them to rejoin their battalion. This the two soldiers at first refused to do, and only left on receiving a direct order from me. Sinclair went off first. Macartney stopped behind a moment to speak. "Have you any last message to send back to your family?" was what he said. But to this question I distinctly remember answering "No"; and also saying, or perhaps only thinking, that I would be my own messenger home to Scotland.

Macartney also disappeared into the night, and this time I was really alone.

III

What had happened in the meantime to the battalion which had marched off in the dark while I lay at the corner of that little wood does not belong to the story, but the adventures of the soldier who sat so long in the night by my side have an indirect bearing on my own history.

The following letter was written by Sinclair at Caudry, and posted on his escape from enemy territory:—

CAUDRY, NORD, FRANCE.

DEAR ——,—This last week has been the worst week I ever put in in my life. Since Sunday morning, 23.8.11, we have been fighting nearly every day, and to make it worse, we are being driven back by overwhelming numbers, but hope to get support soon. As I am in a house in this town, and can't move from the garret lest I be seen, as the house is now in the hands of the Germans, but, thank God, the people I am with are our friends, I know I will be safe till some arrangement is made about getting away. I am not the only one that is here; there are some poor fellows who have been in a cellar here since our retreat from this place. I know you will be wondering why I am left at the town, so I will try and explain. The officer who was in the trench with another four men and me was shot

through the head early in the engagement, but after a while he came to his senses, but found he had lost the power in his legs and right arm. Well, as it happened that I was next him, it fell to me to make him as comfortable as possible, as it was impossible to get him shifted before dark.

We held the trenches till about 12 P.M., when we got the order to retire. When the officer heard that we were to retire he seemed very much cut up about it, as it meant that he would be left behind to be taken prisoner.

We did not care to leave him, so four of us put him on a coat and carried him about ¼ mile to where the regiment was to meet; when we got there we found there were no stretchers to put him on, so another officer gave us an order to leave him, and then decided to leave two men with him. Well, as we were left to do our best for him, by this time the battalion had passed, and not a stretcher was to be found.

Hearing another regiment passing, I sent the other man to try and get a stretcher or a horse; but when he asked for a stretcher, the officer of the other regiment asked what it was for, then told him he was to go back at once and leave a water-bottle and take any message, and that both of us were to fall in in rear of his battalion at once. When our officer heard of this he told us to obey orders, so what could we do? We made him as comfortable

as possible, then went to rejoin the battalion, but found that we had missed the road they had taken, so we were lost.

We decided to sit in a field till daylight came, and with it came an officer of the Royal Irish, and four men who were in the same boat as ourselves. So we joined with them to try and find our way, but we did not get more than three miles when we ran into the enemy,—then it was every man for himself. I heard after from the village people that five of them were made prisoners. Anyhow I have not seen any of them since.

Well, when I got away I hid at the back of a garden; they made search for me, but I happened to escape from their view. I had to sit in the same spot for over seven hours till all the Germans were clear of the place, and they were a mighty lot to pass. However, after a time the man who owned the garden got his eye on me; he then started to work about his garden. When he came up my length he dropped a loaf from under his jacket; it was very acceptable, as I was feeling very hungry. I thought it was about time I was moving, but did not know which way to go. I then decided that I would go back and see how my officer had got on, but did not get far when I struck into another lot of the enemy, and had to sit tight for another two hours. After that I got the place where our officer was left, but found that he was away from that

place. I have since heard that he is in hospital at this place—Caudry. I then thought it would be advisable to make for Maubeuge, as I knew that there was a large fort there; but when I made inquiries from the people as to the direction, all they would tell me was that the enemy was all round, and it would be impossible to get away from here.

In fact, I had been very lucky to get as far as I did without being caught, so they advised me to hide my kit and rifle, and put on civilian clothes till such time as the road gets cleared of the enemy. After having changed my clothes, one of them brought me to this town, and left me at this house. . . .

P.S.—I am trying to escape from this place to-night.

7485 Pte. R. SINCLAIR,
D Co.,
—— Batt.,
—— Inf. Brigade,
3rd Div.

The night passed slowly by the little wood among the beetroot, where I had been left with my rolled-up mackintosh for a pillow, and a shell-torn greatcoat for shelter from the drizzling rain. On my left the burning village of Audencourt, less than half a mile away, lit up the night with a steady glow which occasionally leapt into flame. On the right, some

distance away, a house, or houses, flamed high for a long time, and then all was black and dark again. The slowly moving dawn showed that I was lying within ten or twelve yards off the road which runs from Beaumont across the fields to the road between Caudry and Audencourt.

As I looked towards Audencourt a man in khaki came running. At the sound of my whistle he leapt aside like a deer, then when he saw me lying, ran up. I asked to be lifted down into the sunken road, as I was afraid of lying out in the open on account of possible shell fire. The soldier (a man in the Irish Rifles) took me by the shoulders and dragged me down the bank, made me as comfortable as he could, and then ran off down the road, crossed the road between Caudry and Audencourt, and disappeared across country. Hardly had he disappeared from view when two shells exploded somewhere behind me.

It was now clear, but not full daylight. Two French peasants came up the road; I tried to call to them with the purpose of getting carried away on a cart, and so avoid being taken prisoner. But the peasants were frightened to come near me; they made a detour in the field, and joined the road again fifty yards higher up.

The first I saw of the Germans was a small party of about seven or eight advancing across the field on my left in extended order. The one nearest to

hand saw me, and calling the others, they all came and stood on the road in a circle. Their attitude was distinctly sympathetic, but I was too far gone to struggle with their language.

I watched these men following the line taken by the Irish soldier, and wondered if they were tracking him, and would overtake him.

Before very long another and larger party appeared beside me on the road, but I was quite unable to speak to them, and after stopping to stare, they went on their way.

The whole tide of invasion was now sweeping over the land. Several Uhlans galloped past across the fields, and the road from Audencourt, which was about 150 yards from where I lay, was filled with a procession of machine-guns and transport waggons.

For some inexplicable reason I now tried to get away. By seizing a tuft of grass in the left hand I could move along a few inches at a time. After advancing in this manner about a foot along the edge of the road, I collapsed from exhaustion, and drew the greatcoat over my head. I do not know how long I had been thus covered up when I heard a shout, and peeping through one of the holes in the coat saw a German soldier standing on top of the bank. He was gesticulating and pointing to his revolver, trying to find out if I was armed! but he soon saw I was past further fighting.

He offered me a drink from his water-bottle, and pointed to the Red Cross on his arm. I can never hope to convey to any one what a relief it was to me to see the cross even on the arm of an enemy. The man asked me if I could walk, tried to lift me up, and when he saw I was paralysed said he would go for a stretcher.

"You will go away and leave me here," I said.

"I am of the Red Cross," he replied; "you are therefore my Kamarad and I will never leave you."

I gave him my whistle. Before going off to seek for help he stood on top of the bank looking down on me where I lay, and pointed once more to the Red Cross badge. "Kamarad, Kamarad, I will come back; never fear, I will come back."

I covered up my head again and fell into a semi-conscious stupor.

The sound of a step on the road aroused my attention, and for a brief instant my eyes seemed to deceive, for they showed me the tall figure of an old man dressed in a white overall. Behind him were two youths carrying a stretcher.

The figure spoke in French: "Are you a wounded British officer? There are three that I am looking for; do you know where the others are?"

I told him our trenches were close behind; and as he and his acolytes were off at once for further search, leaving the stretcher on the road, I added, "First put me on the stretcher." To lie on the

stretcher after the hard ground was inexpressible relief to my paralysed limbs. Soon the white figure returned. "We have found them, but they are both dead, *et un d'eux a l'air si jeune.*" The sun was shining with vigorous warmth. One of the boys shaded my head with his cap, and we were about to start when my friend of the German Red Cross appeared on top of the bank with a stretcher. At the same time our little group was joined by a young Uhlan officer. The German Red Cross man wished to transfer me to his stretcher, and the old man in white was determined not to let me go. The beginning of a discussion instantly ceased on the arrival of the German officer, who, speaking French with ease, turned first to the old Frenchman, "Where is your Red Cross armlet? What authority have you to search for wounded?"

The old man drew from his pocket a Red Cross badge, which seemed sufficient authority. The officer, sitting on his horse between the two stretchers, then looked down at me, "Choisissez," he said.

I answered him with a smile, "J'y suis j'y reste."

The German Red Cross soldier came up to my stretcher and took my hand, "Adieu, Kamarad."

The young German officer leant over and offered me a piece of chocolate. "Why have you English come against us?" he said; "it is no use. We shall

be in Paris in three days. We have no quarrel with you English."

His eyes sparkled with the joy of victory, yet as he rode off I knew that some day his turn would come to lie even as I was.

At the entrance, or near the entrance to the village of Caudry, we were stopped by another officer on horseback. This time the colloquy was in English. "Officer? What regiment? Good! What Brigade?" "I don't know." "How many divisions were you?" "I don't know." "Ah, you won't tell me, but I know there were four divisions. We have captured men from many different regiments. Pass on."

On the way through the village the stretcher party was held up by the passing of a grey-coated infantry regiment. I have in my mind just a glimpse of the houses in the village, and one of them wrecked by a shell, but I was too exhausted to keep my eyes open when my stretcher was put down outside the school, which had been turned into a field-ambulance during yesterday's battle.

The French have many qualities, but order in emergency is not one of them.

A crowd of civilians blocked the entrance to the school, and swarmed chattering around my stretcher: "Il est mort! Mais non il n'est pas mort, il respire! Mais je dis qu'il est mort!"

I settled the discussion by opening one weakly indignant eye.

On being carried into a room which is on the right as you go in at the lobby, I was put on a table. Part of the crowd from the street followed on behind. Some one at once took my boots off, and forgot to give them back again. The doctor took off my bandage and applied something which felt like snow to the top of my head, then whispered in my ear, "Do not speak, do not think; keep quiet if you wish to live."

. . . . . .

Meublez vous
à la Maison

CAMILLE WANECQ,

Specialité de 160 RUE ST. QUENTIN,
Bureaux Américains. CAUDRY.

Livraison à domicile.

The furniture had been removed from la maison Camille Wanecq and the shop turned into a hospital ward. The tall grey-bearded man in the white coat, who had taken complete charge, brought me to this house, which was opposite his own. Here on the night of the 26th word had been left that three British officers were lying wounded near the village of Audencourt. At daybreak M. Heloire had put on his white overall (he is a veterinary surgeon), set

out with a stretcher, and searched until he found me lying by the roadside.

Still under the guidance of M. Heloire, I was taken through the shop up to a room on the first floor. The staircase is very steep, and they had great difficulty with the stretcher. I distinctly remember wondering if a coffin would present equal difficulties on the way down.

For the first time I began to feel great pain in my feet. There was also an awful twitching, jerky, sawing movement of the right arm, over which I had no control. This spasmodic movement was only stilled by the injection of morphia.

When the effects of the first injection began to pass off, I was conscious of some one sitting by the bedside, and, feeling very thirsty, I asked the shadowy form "à boire." The shadow did not respond, and after a while made the following remark: "I dunno what 'e is saying; 'e must be off his chump."

My brain was scarcely able for thought in more than one language, and it was after a long pause that I said in English, "Who the devil are you?"

The voices said they were English Red Cross soldiers, and had been sent in to look after me by a tall old gentleman dressed in a white coat.

Now this most excellent M. Heloire had acted as he thought for the best, but the result was not at all a happy one for me. Whenever I wanted any-

thing the soldiers went downstairs and brought up somebody to whom I had to interpret my requirements. In my exhausted condition this was impossible. The request for a drink and the short conversation with the soldiers had nearly finished me off, but I made one more effort to a large French-speaking shadow. I said, "Renvoyez les anglais."

And so the English soldiers were sent away, and I came under the care of Marthe and Madeleine.

To my dim consciousness all persons were manifest as shadows. Marthe and Madeleine took turns watching me day and night. Marthe sat weeping; a long, long way off her shadow seemed, yet in an instant that same shadow was bending over the bed. "A boire." The water remained untasted; some of it trickled down my face. Then they tried in vain to get me to suck the liquid up a straw. I could hear every word spoken in whispers round my bed. "Il faut aller chercher M. le Curé et M. Heloire," and some one at the door murmured in a low voice, "Il va mourir cette nuit le pauvre." My own thoughts were monopolised by the thirst of fever. Deep black shadows now hovered round my bed. There seemed to be two—one larger and more active than the other. A voice full of pity asked me if I wished to make my confession. The possibility of speech was far away, and even to think was an effort that seemed dangerous. Seeing that I was too weak to make any response, the two Curés

administered Extreme Unction. The sound of prayers, which seemed so far away, mingled with the tramp of soldiers, martial music, the rattle of wheels on the cobble-stones, the ceaseless tumult of invasion which for two days and two nights rolled on through the paved streets of Caudry.

It was indeed a feeble dam which from the 23rd to the 26th had held back such a torrent as, while I lay there listening, was flowing on triumphant and irresistible.

Early next morning M. le Curé returned.

"Yes," said Marthe, "he is better; see, he can drink from a glass." Marthe and Madeleine were arranging a table, some one in the room was weeping, the shadows moved and prayed.

There is between life and death a period when the normal process of thought comes to an end—a new mode of consciousness is taking the place of the old—the soul, standing on the threshold, looks back at the body lying helpless.

During the night, in that little room in Caudry, while Marthe sat by my bedside and wept, I was slowly discovering another self, distinct from the body lying on the bed, and yet connected with it in mist and shadow; and this was the shadow of death.

CHAPTER III

CAMBRAI

"En haut! Montez au numéro sept," shouted a shrill female voice; "c'est un officier, il faut le mettre au numéro sept."

And so I became No. 7, Hôpital Civil, Cambrai. My room was a small one on the first floor; the furniture consisted of two beds and two iron stands. The floor was polished, the walls painted a dull brown, the door of iron, with upper panel of glazed glass. It was some time before these surroundings presented themselves to my view. At least forty-eight hours I remained without much consciousness, thankful in my lucid intervals that the jolting of the cart which brought me the eight miles from Caudry had ceased, thankful for the soft bed and the quiet cool room.

I wonder if Dr. Debu remembers his first visit to me as well as I do? My memory of all that happened during these days is very clear.

I could not yet see faces, to me nurse and doctor were different coloured shadows, yet I remember well the nurse whispering to the doctor, "he is very

bad," and the doctor answering, "Oui! mais je crois qu'il va s'en tirer." I do not remember exactly when I began to recognise faces and to speak. They told me later, but at the time I did not realise that the words came singly and with great difficulty, as if the language was unfamiliar.

My powers of speech were stimulated by a visit from Madame la Directrice of the hospital, who came to my bedside speaking with weird gestures in a strange tongue. It occurred to me that she might perhaps be trying to speak English, and so I addressed her slowly as follows: "Mettez vous bien dans la tête, Madame, que je parle le Français aussi bien que vous." After that day no one in the hospital made any further attempt to practise English at my bedside.

The adjoining bed was occupied for a short time by a French Colonel, who had been shot through both thighs and seemed in great pain. The whole night long he kept up a constant groaning, with intermittent exclamation in a loud voice, "Je suis dans des souffrances atrrroces." These Marseillais are a most talkative race. This one was also very deaf.

Attempts at conversation with me were hopeless, as he could not hear my whisper. However, he found consolation by talking to himself about himself most of the night.

When the nurse came in next morning she paid

no attention to the old Colonel, whose wounds, although severe, were not dangerous, but after taking my temperature she looked anxiously at the thermometer.

My temperature was up two points!

That morning the Colonel was removed to another part of the hospital.

As the window of my room could not be opened, I was taken into an exactly similar room on the opposite side of the corridor. This was a pleasanter room than the other, it got the morning sun, and the window opened on to the kitchen garden. Shortly after moving into this room two visitors came to see me. One was M. le Médecin Chef, who was afterwards imprisoned at the Hôpital 106. At this time, however, he was allowed by the Germans to visit the hospitals. I was quite unable to speak the day he came to see me, but was able to recognise and wonder at the French uniform.

My other visitor was a German officer. I can only vaguely remember that he was tall, well-built, and I think wore a beard. He spoke English fluently, and said that he used often to visit Cairo many years ago, when one of the battalions of my regiment was stationed there. I asked him if he would send news of me to England. He sat down by my bed, and put my name and regiment down in his note-book.

The post-card he sent, which reached the War

Office *viâ* Geneva, was signed von Schwerin. It may seem a small thing to be grateful for, but the sending of that post-card was a very hard favour to obtain and a very great favour to be granted.

During the first few months of the German occupation of Cambrai no messages or letters were allowed to leave the district, and the severest penalties were imposed on those who were caught attempting to get letters out of the country. It was said that two German officers were sent home in disgrace for writing to Geneva on behalf of a wounded prisoner.

On September 15 a French Red Cross nurse came in to see me at 10 o'clock in the evening. She was a tall, fine-looking woman, dressed in a large heavy coat. After asking my name, she said she had a letter to give me from an officer of my regiment.

The letter, written in pencil, on a page from an exercise book, was as follows:—

CAUDRY HOSPITAL.

MY DEAR M.,—So glad to hear you are going on all right, as I heard you had a bad wound in the head, which sounded serious. I saw a priest a few days ago who told me there was an officer of my regiment at Cambrai, and I presumed it must be you.

I also heard you were brought to the hospital the

day I was brought in, but had left by the time I got here.

I hear our regiment was captured *en bloc* at Bertry; they marched slap into the Germans in the dark, so we may be better off where we are. I hear M., M., and L. were killed the day we got wounded.

We are very well done here; it is rather an amateur show, but every one does what they can for us. I got a bullet across my scalp, but it is nearly healed now, and I am up and about. I expect ——Btt. must be in the country by now somewhere, but I don't know.

I hope this finds you in good spirits. I think we may hope to be relieved soon. Best luck.—Yours ever, A. A. D.

A nurse from Cambrai is here who has kindly volunteered to take this back with her.

The nurse told me that she was returning to Caudry next day and would take back an answer. She also added that my friend hoped to escape.

Next morning I was able to scrawl two or three lines, holding a pencil in the right hand and pushing it along with the left.

Major D. succeeded in getting away from Caudry, and after many adventures crossed safely over the Dutch frontier.

LE COLONEL FAMÉCHON

During the first month of my stay in the hospital, with a French surgeon, French nurses, and French soldier orderlies, there was little to remind me of the fact that I was a prisoner of war.

No one in the hospital believed that the Germans would remain at Cambrai for more than a few weeks. The arrival of the French troops was expected and hoped for from day to day. Optimists declared that in a week the city would be delivered, and only the most pessimistic put off the joyful day to the end of September. The prevailing belief that the Germans would soon be driven out of the country was strengthened by the vague reports of disaster to the German arms which were current in Cambrai after the battle of the Marne.

At this time every story, however improbable, found ardent believers. French and British troops were seen hovering on the outskirts if not at the very gates of the city. It was even asserted that somebody had seen Japanese troops! 200,000 of whom had landed at Marseilles some few days before! The suppression of all newspapers left the universal craving for news unsatisfied, and the daily paper was replaced by short type-written notes which were secretly passed from hand to hand. I remember the contents of one of these compositions which was handed me by a visitor with great parade of secrecy and importance.

It was composed of brief short sentences:

"Cambrai the last town in German occupation. Germans retiring all along the line. Maubeuge re-occupied by French and British troops. Revolution in Berlin. Streets in flames. Death of Empress."

All such absurd stories probably emanated from a German source and represent some obscure form of German humour.

The most exciting incident which took place at Cambrai in September was the visit of two areoplanes, either French or English, which flew over the town just out of rifle range.

The aviators were greeted with a tremendous fusillade, which was started by the sentry on the church tower close to my window. For nearly ten minutes rifles, machine-guns, and artillery kept up a steady fire. The nurses who had rushed out to see the areoplanes soon came runing back, as bullets were falling on the hospital roof.

The sequel of this first air raid was long a subject of discussion. The Germans allege that bombs were dropped by the aviators. The French declare that German guns fired at them from outside the town, and that the shells fell and exploded in the town.

The casualties were 7 civilians and 15 Germans killed, and a number of wounded. Seven horses were killed on the Place du Marché.

When the firing ceased a poor woman and her little child of three years old were brought into

the hospital very severely wounded. The mother's leg had to be amputated, and the poor little baby had one of its arms taken off.

Although the German authorities blamed the British, it is hardly likely that bombs were dropped on Cambrai in September 1914, and there can be little doubt that the damage was caused by German shells.

During the first two or three weeks of my stay at the hospital I saw very little of either the surgeon or the two nurses, with whom afterwards I came to be on terms of great friendship. At that time the number of wounded was so great that the nurses had not a single minute to spare.

The hospital was overflowing with the wounded soldiers; many died within a few hours of arriving, and many more died in the operating-room. The number of severe cases was so great that it was impossible that all should receive the needful attention in time. Dr. Debu spent twenty-four hours at a stretch in the operating-room.

More and more wounded kept arriving, until every bed was occupied and wounded men were lying in the corridors, and many were turned away from the door because there was no room.

From the 27th of August to the first days of September, the increasing number of deaths in the hospital made it more and more difficult to make arrangements for removing the bodies to the ceme-

tery. It was therefore suggested that graves should be dug in the hospital garden opposite my window.

The graves were actually dug, but were too shallow and could not be used. The open trenches remained empty for some weeks, until some of the wounded soldiers took on the job of filling in the earth.

Two nurses had charge of the ward and rooms on our floor—Mlle. Waxin, one of the hospital permanent staff, and Mlle. Debu, the surgeon's daughter.

Mlle. Waxin had also charge of the operating-room; she was as clever as a surgeon and as strict as a gendarme with her patients. Rather under the average height, her figure inclined, but very slightly, to plumpness. Very dark eyes that could sparkle and also look severe. A young, round, rosy, but very determined face. A typical French girl.

Mlle. Debu, although without hospital training and with no previous experience of nursing, volunteered from the first day of the invasion to help in her father's hospital. Mlle. Debu showed the true spirit of France. She was only nineteen. Never for a moment did she lose courage. From the very start she worked with the skill and endurance of a trained nurse, and her face, ever quick to smile, never betrayed, even for a moment, the fatigues and worries of the day.

When the rays of the morning sun lit up the top

of the glass door it was time for breakfast, and punctually to the minute Mlle. Debu appeared with a cup of chocolate which she made for me herself. "Bonjour, Monsieur le numéro sept," the brown eyes twinkled and the dimple smiled at the daily jest.

The days passed very slowly. I was too weak to read, and even the occasional visit from a wounded French or British soldier was more than my head could bear. Every afternoon, at about five o'clock, a body of German infantry marched past the hospital, singing the Wacht am Rhein in part-song, an unpleasant daily reminder of the conqueror's presence.

In the room opposite there was a German officer who spent most of the day walking up and down the corridor whistling a hackneyed and out-of-date waltz tune. He always whistled the same tune, and it got on my nerves. The nurse told me that there was nothing the matter with him except an alleged pimple on his foot. This officer must have been a delicate specimen of German militarism. He was known in the hospital as "Parapluie," owing to the fact that when setting out one evening to dine in town he borrowed an umbrella to protect his uniform from the rain.

A regular plague of flies was one of the minor discomforts which had to be endured during the day. Mlle. Debu stuck a piece of fly-paper to the

gas chandelier which hung in the middle of the room, but only a few dozen flies fell victims to greed and curiosity, and the others seemed to take warning from the sad example. At meal-times there were always crowds of these uninvited guests, who, from the contempt with which they treated me, were evidently quite aware that I was unable to drive them away. One fly, rather bigger than the others (Alphonse I called him), was very persistent in his endeavours to land on my nose. When tired of this game he would leave me for a while and circle round and round the fly-paper, always about to land, and yet always suspicious of danger. The career of Alphonse was cut short by a method of attack which is probably considered by the insect kingdom as contrary to the rules of civilised warfare. One afternoon Madame la Directrice brought up a box of powder which she said was guaranteed to destroy all the flies in the room in half an hour. The windows were shut, and the powder was sprinkled all over the room and all over my bed. In about ten minutes it was impossible to breathe. The powder got into my eyes and lungs, and I had to ring and ask for the windows to be opened. But the flies had succumbed, and poor Alphonse was swept up off the floor next morning along with at least a hundred of his companions.

I gathered a great deal of information about

DOCTEUR DEBU, CHIRURGIEN-EN-CHEF, HÔPITAL CIVIL, CAMBRAI

what was going on in the hospital from watching the glazed window in the door.

One morning I said to Mlle. Debu when she brought in breakfast, "Who was it died in the ward last night?"

The nurses always tried to hide from me the large number of deaths that took place in the early days, but I knew all about it from studying the glazed window through which the outlines of passers-by could faintly be distinguished. One man followed at a short distance by another meant a stretcher was being carried past. It is not hard to guess what is the burden of stretchers which are carried out of the ward when the dawn is just breaking. At this hour the hospital is at its quietest. But in the garden the sparrows twitter and chirrup that it will soon be time to get up. An early and hungry blackbird will sometimes whistle one or two impatient notes to hasten the coming of day. When the new daylight enters my room with its fresh, clean morning air, the first picture shown on the glass door is that of two men marching, with an interval between. They wear slippers and make no noise. And many months after the name of the burden they carry on the stretcher will appear on the Roll of Honour—"Previously reported missing —now reported died of wounds as a prisoner of war."

It is usually about eight o'clock that the surgeon's

visit takes place. First there is the rattle and jingle of bottles all along the corridor, which heralds the advance of the portable dressing-table. This table runs on rubber wheels, and is fitted with an ingenious basin in which the surgeon can wash his hands under a tap which is turned on by pressing a lever with the foot. Sometimes, when the door of my room has been left ajar, I can see as they pass the surgeons in their white overalls followed by the nurses and orderlies. There are one or two very serious cases which have to be dressed by the surgeons, but the visit is chiefly an inspection. Cases where the balance lies between amputation and death have to be submitted to the sure judgment of Dr. Debu.

During the early days there was a long waiting list for the operating-room, as there was scarcely time even to deal with those who were in immediate danger of death.

In the majority of the cases brought in the wounds had not been dressed for several days. Men had remained three or four days at the place where they had been struck down. Others were put into farmhouses with broken legs or arms, and left unattended for a fortnight. Others again—and they were very numerous—had been brought into Cambrai by the Germans and deposited in some temporary ambulance-shed, and left with scarcely any medical attention, their wounds dressed perhaps

once a week. When such poor sufferers as these arrived at last at the hospital, it was as a rule too late for anything but amputation, and often too late even for that.

One evening, about the 10th of September, a German officer arrived at the hospital with an order that all wounded Germans should be at once taken to the station. There was at this time, in one of the rooms adjoining mine, a German officer who had been shot in the bladder. Mlle. Waxin had charge of the case, and, thanks to her careful nursing, there seemed to be some chance of his recovery. When the order came to move all Germans, Mlle. Waxin protested that if this officer were moved he would die. But the Germans refused to listen to her, and took their officer off to the station. That same evening the poor fellow was taken back from the station, and died in the hospital within an hour of his return. Next day a large number of French and British wounded were taken away to Germany.

The vacant beds were at once filled with cases brought in for operation from the various temporary hospitals. Among the new arrivals were several British officers, two of whom, Irvine in the King's Own and Halls in the Hampshire Regiment, were put in the room opposite mine. Halls had been shot through both ankles, but after a few days managed to hobble across the corridor to pay me a visit. A French officer, wounded in the knee, used

sometimes to come and see me, but I have forgotten his name.

It was on a Sunday that the sad announcement was made that my two newly-found friends were to be taken away to Germany. Halls said it was such bad luck to be carried away just as the French were about to enter the town!

The French soldier-orderlies all left the hospital at the same time as Halls and Irvine, and the duty of looking after my room fell to an individual named François. Cheerfulness was his only virtue; laziness and dirt were his principal and more obvious vices. François was a young fellow of nineteen, formerly a bargee working on a neighbouring canal. Owing to an accident which happened about a year before war broke out, his leg had to be taken off, and he was afterwards kept on in the hospital to act as handyman. In spite of his wooden leg he was wonderfully active, and when aroused was capable of doing a lot of work. François invariably wore a very large and very dirty cap, tilted right on to the back of his thick, black, curly hair. The cap and the fag-end of a cigarette sticking to his under lip were permanent fixtures. His breath smelt of garlic and sour wine. The only person in the hospital to whose orders he paid the least attention was Mlle. Waxin, and it was only under her severe eye that François made any use of broom or duster.

On fine afternoons during the last week of September I was taken out on to the Terrace on a stretcher. Irvine was also lifted out in a chair, and looked very thin and pale. Like most of us in the hospital, he had been wounded on the 26th August; the wound was a very severe one, the bullet having actually hit the edge of his identity disc. Two other subalterns in the Manchester Regiment were both lying out on stretchers, and we had a talk with Captain Beresford of the Worcesters, who was already so far recovered from a bullet in the lung that he was able to walk. Several wounded French and British soldiers were also taken out to enjoy the sun.

One of the Frenchmen I at once recognised to be a Curé. His figure was more suited to the soutane than to the uniform of a Pioupiou, and a very pronounced accent betrayed the fact that he belonged to the Auvergne country. His comrades were evidently in the way of teasing him about his accent, and a great discussion was going on (with much winking at me by the other soldiers). In what part of France was the best French spoken? M. le Curé addressed me as an impartial witness: "N'est pas, mon capitaine, nous autres dans le midi de la France nous parlons plus grrammaticalemaing que les habitans du Nord—nous avons un peu *d'assent* mais nous parlons grrammaticalemaing." My verdict being in M. le Curé's favour, he entered into

animated conversation, delighted, he said, to meet *"enfaing"* some one who could explain to him a question in which he was much interested but of which he understood nothing: "Qu'est que ce que le 'homme-roulle'?" It was time to go in, so we parted, and my inability to answer his question remained undiscovered. I never saw the Curé again, and was told he had been taken off to Germany.

Among the lesser discomforts of the early days in the Civil Hospital was the ordeal of being washed, which I only went through twice in the first three weeks. The nurses could not think of washing patients, as they had not time to dress all the wounds that required urgent attention, and therefore the washing was done by François, and it was a sort of job to which he was evidently quite unaccustomed.

The impossibility of getting any sleep, the pain from lying in one position, and the irritation of repeated mustard plasters (which were brought up and applied by François), soon became relatively unimportant in the presence of a new trouble. One evening something in my head began to throb. It felt like the steady regular beat of a pulse deep inside. When Mlle. Waxin came to see me that night I told her about it. Of course, as all good nurses do, she said it was nothing, but she would speak to the surgeon. Next morning Dr. Debu, after examination, declared that an abscess had formed in the wound owing to the presence of a

bone splinter. This would necessitate a small operation.

My first acquaintance with the movable dressing-table, which carried a fearsome collection of surgical weapons, took place at nine o'clock that evening. Mlle. Waxin started the proceedings with a shaving-brush. After lathering the top of my head, she then shaved the hair off all around the wound, and I was ready for the surgeon's visit. When Dr. Debu came in, he said it would be better if I could manage to do without an anæsthetic. "How long are you going to be?" I asked.

"Not more than a minute."

The apprehension was worse than the reality. A quick movement of the lancet laid open the abscess and disclosed the jagged splintered edge of the skull. With a pair of pincers the surgeon broke off one or two pieces of bone about the size of a tooth, then jammed in a piece of lint soaked in iodine. The whole affair lasted two minutes. From now onwards my head had to be dressed every day, and a piece of lint nearly a foot long was pushed in every morning to keep the wound open, and any splinters that could be found were snipped off with the pincers.

Now that the pressure of work in the hospital was somewhat relieved, my two nurses would sometimes come and sit in my room, and I was cheered with a regular afternoon visit from some of the nurses

from neighbouring hospitals. Mlle. L'Etoile and her friends used to bring me books, boxes of the sweets known as "Bétises de Cambrai," peaches, nectarines, grapes, and long, fat, juicy "poires Duchesse," the largest and sweetest pears I have ever tasted. Afternoon tea "avec le numéro sept" was a cheerful and often noisy meal. It was such a relief to forget for a moment the presence of the Boche and to hear the sound of laughter.

In addition to my friends who were regular visitors, we had occasional visits from curious but well-meaning strangers. Some people find it impossible when visiting hospitals to get beyond the everlasting phrase, "Where were you wounded?"

The limit of conversational inanity was reached by one of these casual visitors, a stout blonde dame. Our conversation ran as follows:—

"Bonjour, bonjour; vous êtes un officier anglais, n'est-ce pas?"

"Mais oui, Madame!"

"Où avez-vous été blessé?"

"A la tête. . . ."

"Vous restez couché comme ça toute la journée?"

"C'est que j'ai la jambe paralysée."

"Et vous n'avez pas eu de blessure à la jambe?"

"Rien du tout."

"Alors vous étiez donc paralysé avant la guerre ! ! !"

"Ce qui prouve," as one of my nurses said, "que

toutes les bétises de Cambrai ne sont pas dans les boîtes à bonbons."

It was about this time that a visit was paid to the hospital by Mgr. l'Archevêque de Cambrai, who went round all the wards with kind words of consolation for each one. The Archbishop hesitated on the threshold of my room, and was about to pass on, fearing no doubt to disturb me, and perhaps foreseeing the probable difficulties of conversation.

"Entrez donc, Monseigneur," I said; "Veuillez prendre la peine de vous asseoir."

The Archbishop was quite taken aback, and I could see Mlle. Waxin behind was convulsed with inward mirth. She said to me afterwards, "Où êtes vous allé chercher de si grandes phrases?"

His lordship came and sat by my bedside for a few moments. He is a man of great personality and charm, who gives an impression of strength and tact.

After the Archbishop had gone, Mlle. Waxin told me that the vacant bed in my room was to be occupied by a British officer. This turned out to be Wilkinson in the Manchester Regiment. The manner of his arrival next morning was somewhat peculiar. The door opened slowly, and a large, very tall man, dressed like a nigger minstrel in black-and-white striped pyjamas, and covered with bandages, hopped across the room on the left leg; with three vigorous hops he was sitting on the bed.

His right foot was bandaged, also one of his hands. Nothing could be seen of his face but a nose and one eye.

"Thank goodness there is some one to talk to," was what the strange figure said. Then followed the necessary mutual explanations.

The only method of movement possible to Wilkinson was hopping, at which he had become quite an expert. Shrapnel bullets had lodged themselves all over his body, fortunately avoiding vital spots. The worst of his wounds was a fractured jaw, which gave him a great deal of pain, and made chewing of food impossible.

When Mlle. Waxin came in to dress my wound, some of the other nurses sometimes came out of curiosity, as the working of the brain was quite visible. The pushing in of long pieces of lint and the removal of splinters, which took place every morning, was quite painless, and only took a few minutes. But it usually took the two nurses half an hour to dress the various wounds of the new arrival, and on the first morning Dr. Debu extracted a bullet from just under the skin below the small of the patient's back.

Shortly after Wilkinson's arrival a most tragic event took place in the adjoining ward.

In some mysterious manner the electric bells ceased to ring every evening about nine o'clock. This was a very serious matter, especially as the

night nurse that particular week—Mme. Z—was very slack about her duties, and never went round the hospital during the night to see if all was well. The disturbance started about eleven o'clock, with a dull thud as of a body falling, followed by shouting and rattling of the iron tables on the floor of the ward. The noise, heard through closed doors, was sufficient to wake Wilkinson. The shouting ceased for a moment, only to start afresh with new vigour. Wilkinson took two hops across the room and opened the door; the tables still rattled, and the calls for help continued. A French soldier, with one arm in a sling, clothed in nothing but a nightshirt, came walking gingerly down the corridor in his bare feet. When he saw our door open, he came in to tell us all about it. A soldier who was badly wounded in the head had suddenly become delirious, torn off his bandages, and fallen out of bed. There was no one in the ward able to help the poor fellow, who lay moaning on the floor in a state too awful for description. The bells did not ring, and there was nothing to be done except shout. The French soldier went along the corridor to the head of the staircase to call for the night watcher. After quite a long time some one downstairs woke up to the fact that there was something wrong. The night nurse appeared, followed by the night porter. They lifted the dying man on to the bed, bandaged up his poor head, and gave him a strong injection

of morphia. One of the French soldiers told me some time after that the poor fellow died quite noiselessly in the middle of the night, but I knew early that morning when a stretcher passed the glass door that the tragedy was over.

Mlle. Waxin used often to tell me about the different cases under her charge.

I was never able to get the name of one of her favourites whom she called her "petit anglais." This was a young Irish boy badly shot in the stomach. Dr. Debu told me that he might live for several months, but that there was no hope of recovery. The dressing of his wounds was nearly always done by Mlle. Waxin, under whose gentle hand he never complained of the awful agony from which morphia was the only relief. Although the ward in which he lay was on the ground floor, we could sometimes hear the screams of agony upstairs, screams which no one but Mlle. Waxin could silence. "C'est mon petit anglais qui m'appelle," she used to say.

It is remarkable that no matter how badly a soldier is wounded, even when he can neither eat nor drink, he will be soothed by a cigarette. The Frenchman above mentioned, unable to eat, unable to speak, and scarcely conscious, his brain bleeding from a great hole in the skull, was yet able the day before he died to smoke a cigarette. "Le petit anglais," who was never free from pain, found his

greatest joy in the few cigarettes that Mlle. Waxin, in spite of the shortage of tobacco, brought to his bedside every morning. It was very hard to get any tobacco in Cambrai until late in October, when the Germans allowed it to be imported from Belgium.

One of the nurses who was able to speak English used sometimes to come and see me, and one day she brought me the following note from a soldier in my own regiment who was in one of the wards downstairs:—

No. 0000, Pte. N. N.,
B Co.,
1st —— Highlanders.

DEAR SIR,—I was sorry to hear that you had been one of the unlucky ones, along with myself, to be put aside and away from the regiment. I hope that you will pull through all right. I am getting on, but it is my legs that are all the hinder. It was a very bad place I was wounded in the stoumick. Now, dear sir, I hope that you won't think me forward in asking you for a favour. If you would let me have the advance of 2s. so that I could get some tobacco, as I have lost everything. N. N.

This man recovered, and was exchanged many months afterwards.

Another young Irishman, who was a great favourite, had been badly wounded in the foot.

It was found necessary to take the foot off, and after the operation, when Mlle. Waxin went to console him, she found him lying with his face to the wall, silently weeping.

"I was going to scold him for being such a baby," she said to me afterwards, "but when the English-speaking sister explained to me the reason of the tears, I felt like crying myself."

"It is not the pain, sister, that troubles me," he said to them, "but you see with a wooden leg I can never go back again to the old regiment."

On 9th Oct. we had a very strict inspection of the hospital, and a great number of the remaining British wounded were put down on the list of "transportables." The French nurses always sent off the British wounded dressed in French uniform, as it was a fact notorious at Cambrai that the Germans robbed British wounded of their uniform. In many cases German soldiers took greatcoats away from wounded men and gave a five-mark piece in exchange. The ill-treatment which was specially shown to British soldiers on the journey to Germany was the principal reason why the French, whenever they could get a chance, disguised our wounded soldiers in French uniforms. The fact that, in the early days of the war, British prisoners were invariably treated worse than the French cannot be denied, and will be amply proved from the evidence of returned prisoners, and from

other sources of information at present unavailable. It is the truth that nearly all British soldiers taken prisoners and sent to Germany during the first months of the war were made the object of special contempt, neglect, or cruelty. Such conduct undoubtedly constitutes a departure "from laws of humanity, and from the dictates of the public conscience," which are supposed to govern the conduct of civilised nations.[1] To illtreat or insult a wounded and helpless enemy is the most despicable offence a soldier can commit. Men who do these things dishonour the name of soldier.

The meaning of war without chivalry was first brought home to the inhabitants of Cambrai when they saw the way the victorious Germans treated the unfortunate wounded who had been brought into the town from the neighbouring battlefields. During the first week of September hundreds of wounded, French and English, were sent to Germany packed in cattle trucks, with no medical attendance, no food, no water. It was only natural that in our hospital both nurses and patients should dread the days when German officials came round searching for cases that could be considered "transportable." The inspections which took place on the 9th and 11th of October were carried out with great severity. My companion Wilkinson was taken

[1] See Convention concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land: The Hague, 1907, p. 47.

away, and many were put down on the list who were quite unfit to travel.

Great consternation was created in the hospital on the evening of the 11th, when an order arrived that the whole male staff of the hospital was to report forthwith at the Kommandantur. This was the end of the Civil Hospital as a French hospital. The doctors (except Debu), orderlies, and assistants were marched off to the Kommandantur at seven o'clock that evening, and spent the whole night in a cold unfurnished room without food or drink. Next morning the whole party, with two exceptions, were told that they were prisoners, and had to leave at once for Germany. The two exceptions were one of the surgeons, who was able to make up a plausible story, and François, whose wooden leg saved him from a German prison. Next morning the hospital was taken over by the Germans, and French orderlies were replaced by German soldiers.

The operating-room was shared between the French and German surgeons. Dr. Debu operated in the morning on the French and British, and in the afternoon the room was occupied by German surgeons, the chief of whom was Professor Fessler, a celebrated authority on gunshot wounds. The French nurses at Cambrai told me that they found the German surgeons were, as a rule, quite indifferent and careless in causing pain to the

wounded, of which fact the following incident from my note-book is an example.

"*Oct.* 16*th.*—Dreadful screams from downstairs, lasting two or three minutes. Mlle. Waxin tells me it is only the German surgeon starting to operate before the ether had taken effect."

An exception must be made of Professor Fessler, who was always most humane in the operating-room. Professor Fessler once said to Mlle. Waxin, "If the men who are responsible for war could be made to realise the horror of the operating-room, war would always be avoided." A dying Frenchman was brought in one afternoon in the hope that instant operation might save his life. Professor Fessler performed the operation at once, working with the utmost care, as Mlle. Waxin told me, to avoid giving the poor sufferer unnecessary agony.

The numbers of German patients in the hospital increased day by day, which we took as a hopeful indication that the Germans were not having things all their own way. We had several German officers about this time, and I used to hear about them from Mlle. Waxin. One of them, who was very seriously wounded, insisted upon being dressed by the French nurse, and would not allow the Schwester to touch him. The officer in the room next mine was dying of chest wounds complicated by pneumonia. During the night, through the thin partition, I could follow every sound of his death agony

—the groaning, whistling laboured breathing, the whispering of nurses, the low steady tones of prayer, and then silence.

A very different death scene took place in the hospital a few days later. A German officer was brought in badly shot in the stomach. After his operation he was told that food or drink during the first twenty-four hours would be fatal. He ordered his servant to fetch him a bottle of champagne, drank half of it down and died within five minutes. A bestial and truly Hunnish death.

Now that the Germans had installed themselves in the hospital, there was an end to the pleasant afternoons on the sunny terrace. I was no longer lifted out of bed to sit in a chair, nor was I able even to sit up in bed lest some German should see me and mark my name down as "transportable." The hospital gate was now guarded by a sentry, and no visitors could enter without a written permit from the German authorities, who imposed their authority throughout the whole hospital, without meeting any effective resistance until they encountered Mlle. Waxin. German authority said that a German Schwester would, in future, assist the French nurse in the operating-room. Mlle. Waxin declaring that she would allow no one to interfere with her work, locked the room up and put the keys in her pocket. German authority, after threatening imprisonment, exile, and other dreadful punish-

ments, had to climb down. It would have been easy to take the keys or to force the door, but the services of Mlle. Waxin were indispensable, and it was obviously impossible to compel her to work against her will. So the German Schwester was dismissed. The morning after this matter had been settled another storm arose, when Mlle. Waxin's father came to pay his daily visit and was stopped by the sentry. The determined young girl went to the German Head Surgeon and declared that she refused to work in the hospital unless her father was allowed to visit her at any time of the day or night without hindrance.

After the first few days the friction between the French and German hospital staff began to grow less. The German nurses, although good at sweeping and cleaning, had little or no training at Red Cross work, and were very glad to leave the dressing of complicated injuries to Mlle. Waxin or Mlle. Debu. The night orderlies were stolid, silent, very willing and obliging. The German surgeons from all accounts behaved with tact and courtesy.

This comparatively peaceful state of affairs was upset by the visit of an extremely ugly, very cross and disagreeable individual, with a grey ragged beard, whom we christened "le père grigou." His chief business at Cambrai was to compile lists of "transportables." Grigou, a personage of high rank, was the senior medical officer at Cambrai. To our

great horror he made the Hôpital Civil his head-quarters, and on the day of arrival paid a surprise visit to my room. But not quite a surprise visit, for Mlle. Waxin had wind of his coming and had made all preparations. She bound an extra bandage round my head, took my pillow away, and drew the window curtains. When Grigou arrived I was lying flat on my back in semi-darkness, breathing heavily. My eyes, bloodshot from ten minutes' hard rubbing, looked vacantly up at the ceiling. As Grigou bent over the bed I heaved a long tremulous sigh. Grigou consulted with his colleague, and the verdict was that it was doubtful if I would live till next morning! My name was of course put down on the list of "non-transportable." If Grigou, who visited our floor every day, had seen me, or any German had reported that I had been seen sitting up in bed, our harmless trick would have resulted in my immediate departure for Germany, and my nurses would have got into serious trouble, so I had to live up to my supposed dying condition. Grigou did not remain with us more than a few days, but even when he had left the nurses did not dare to take me out on a stretcher or even to put me into a chair.

At this time the other bed in my room was occupied by a soldier of the Middlesex Regiment. His case was an example of the terrible results which came from delay in attending to shell wounds.

After lying out two days he was taken to Cambrai, and remained for more than a week in a German ambulance with little or no attention. A German surgeon opened his leg without using an anæsthetic. Perhaps there was none to be had. As a result of this the poor fellow's nerve was completely shattered. When he came under Dr. Debu's care it was hoped that his leg might be saved, and a further opening was made just below the knee. The dressing of this man's wounds was a sight not easily forgotten. When the nurses entered the room with the dressing table he begged them to leave him to die. While the bandage was being unrolled he sat with chattering teeth, his face twitching with nervous apprehension; the leg was dreadful to look at, the flesh just above and below the knee lay folded back, raw and discoloured, with rubber tubing protruding from both sides of the calf. It was a hopeless case, and the attempt to save his leg had to be given up. After the amputation he suffered far less pain, but never recovered his self-control. On 20th October he was taken away to Madame Brunet's Convalescent Hospital, reserved for amputated cases, where he died just before Christmas.

It had been decided by the German authorities that beds in the Hôpital Civil were to be reserved solely for cases requiring operation. Dr. Debu therefore found that it was no longer possible for

me to stay, and arranged for my being sent to another hospital.

On the 21st October I was taken away from my kind friends, and for the first time carried by Germans on a German stretcher. Outside the hospital a motor ambulance was waiting. The night was dark, wet, and very cold. My leg was soon numbed with cold, as the ambulance did not start for nearly a quarter of an hour. Through the open end I could see a flickering street lamp which threw glinting reflections on the wet cobble-stones.

A martial step, with the clink of spurs, woke echoes down the silent street; a German officer passed, came into view for an instant under the lamp, then clanked away into darkness.

The ambulance driver and another soldier, who had been conversing together in low tones, stood rigidly to attention until the sound of the officer's steps had died away in the distance. Then the French soldier for whom we were waiting was carried down and placed in the ambulance beside me, the door was closed, shutting out the cold air and the dripping street. "Eh bien, mon lieutenant," said a voice from the stretcher, "nous voila partis! My father was taken prisoner in 1870, and voila, I am now also a prisoner, but that is nothing—*on les aura,* cette fois ci, on les aura ces sales têtes d'alboches!"

CHAPTER IV

LE NUMÉRO 106

THE school building, hurriedly transformed on the outbreak of war into a hospital, forms three sides of a quadrangle, the fourth side of which is blocked by a high wall, so that in the courtyard thus formed the sun can never shine.

This was the hospital of the French Red Cross—l'Hôpital Auxiliaire du Territoire, No. 106, Union des femmes de France. The accommodation for patients is limited to five rooms, all of which look on to the dismal courtyard. "Salle un," to which I was taken on arrival, the only room at all resembling a hospital ward, is a long lofty room running the whole length of one side of the quadrangle.

Along each side of the room beds of various sorts and sizes were ranged several yards apart. Mine was a large and brand-new double bedstead with large ornamental brass knobs. The sheets were of the finest Cambrai linen. Under several layers of blankets, and surrounded on all sides by hot bricks wrapped in flannel, I soon began to recover from the effects of my journey in the ambulance.

The first thing that struck me about my new quarters was the number of nurses and orderlies, most of whom were local volunteers whose experience of hospitals dated from the German invasion. They were relieved from night work by a number of extra volunteers attached to the hospital, who each took one night a week.

It was now past eight o'clock, the nurses had all left, and the night staff—three youths from the city—had taken off their bowler hats, retaining their coats and mufflers, and sat themselves at a table near the door. At the far end of the ward a tall young German soldier sat working silently at his table far into the night. He belonged to the motor transport, and was suffering from earache—so much I had gathered from the nurses. I speculated that perhaps he was working to pass examinations for a commission; the little lamp burning late, the absorbed attitude of the student, seemed incongruous in such surroundings. In the bed opposite mine lay a badly-wounded German officer, shaded by a screen from the lamp round which the night-watchers sat reading. These were the only two Germans in the hospital. Presently the studious German put aside his books, retired to bed, and the ward was silent. The services of the orderlies did not seem to be required,—one sat for a while aimlessly turning over the leaves of an illustrated paper, then rested his head awhile upon the table, and was at once asleep. From

the bed opposite there came a gentle tinkling sound. One of the watchers, a young lad, still a schoolboy, crossed the ward on tiptoe and bent over the wounded man, whose whisper was too feeble to reach my listening ear. The light was turned on, the sleeper resting on the illustrated paper awoke, left the ward, and returned after a few minutes with the night nurse. Now that the screen was moved I could see that the face in the bed opposite was that of a young man, perhaps not more than nineteen; it was the face of a gentleman and a soldier, but drawn, pinched, more yellow than reality in the gaslight, gasping with pain, gasping for morphia. When at last the merciful injection had been given, "Merci, merci," said a strengthened voice; "merci, vous êtes tous si bons pour moi." The screen replaced, the gas turned low, the watchers returned to their table, and all was quiet again till dawn.

Next morning just before ten o'clock the ward was visited by two surgeons, one a German, the other my friend from the Hôpital Civil, Dr. Debu. By the dull light of a wet October morning they examined the wounded German officer. From Dr. D.'s face I knew the case was hopeless. Still, an operation might save life, if not the leg. When the stretcher-bearers came to carry the young officer away he thanked the nurses for their kindness, speaking perfect French with pathetic accents of

real gratitude. He asked that the chocolates, cigarettes, &c., on his table should be distributed among the French soldiers in the ward, and again expressed his thanks, and asked pardon for the trouble he had caused. The operation was unsuccessful. He was taken, such are the coincidences of life and death, to the same bed as I had occupied at the Civil Hospital—numéro sept—where a few days afterwards he died, but not before his mother, in mourning already for two sons, had been called from Germany to his bedside.

No special accommodation was provided for officers at the 106 Hospital. There was a French officer in Salle 5, on the ground floor, and it was arranged that I was to be taken downstairs to his ward.

The worst ward in the hospital was undoubtedly No. 5. The room had formerly been a classroom for junior pupils. Poor little children! how miserable their lessons must have been in that damp sunless schoolroom. On the courtyard side, facing north, the light is obscured by a large wide verandah; on the south side the ground of another small courtyard is five or six feet higher than the level of the room.

Of the Salle cinq I have many pleasant memories, but my first impression of it—a picture which I cannot forget—was sadly depressing. The room is a small one, not more than 36 by 20 feet. One had

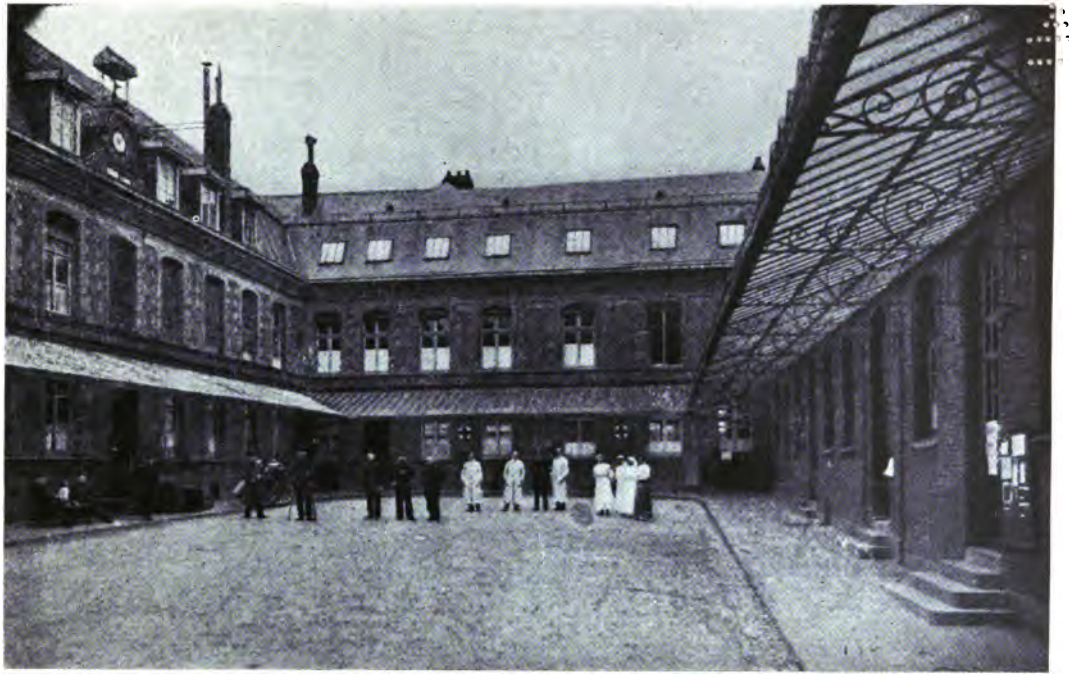
the impression of entering a basement, almost a cellar. The windows were all shut. Judging from the heavy fetid atmosphere, they had not been opened since the declaration of war.

Except for a small open area in the centre, the whole floor-space was filled with beds, which were ranged all round the room, each one close up against the other. In the corner next the door one bed, standing by itself, was occupied by the French officer, X., a reserve Captain of the Colonial Infantry. My bed was also a corner one. On one side stood a cupboard in which bandages, morphia, and other necessaries were kept.

Salle 5 was not only the worst ward, but it also contained the worst cases. This was probably owing to the fact that the nurse in charge, Mme. Buquet, was the most efficient nurse in the hospital. The number of beds was thirteen. No. 1, known as "le Picard," was a cheery, jovial, hardy little fellow, who had lost a leg. No. 2, Sergt. Blanchard, suffered from a badly suppurating wound in the thigh, and was taken away for an operation to the Civil Hospital, where he died a few days after. No. 3, Chasseur Alpin, shot through the chest about an inch above the heart. A very serious case. No. 6, left arm amputated, right leg and foot shattered. Nos. 8 and 9, very bad gangrenous leg wounds. Both died shortly afterwards.

Under the circumstances it was perhaps only

natural that on my arrival into the Salle cinq I was rather depressed. Most of the poor fellows in the ward were in continuous pain, but the only one who made audible complaint was No. 6. This man was a Charentais from Cognac. His wounds, although very terrible, were yet not so bad or so painful as those of many others who suffered in silence. No. 6 never ceased day or night, except when under the influence of morphia, from groaning and whining about his foot; he was known in the ward as "Oh mon pied!" On the afternoon of my arrival No. 6 came near to death—nearer even than he did on the day when a German shell blew off his arm and destroyed most of his right leg. No. 6 was sitting propped up in bed, when suddenly his head fell back, his thin yellow face turned a pasty white, and he lay back apparently a corpse. Fortunately an orderly was in the room at the time, and help was immediately forthcoming. About a dozen nurses crowded round the bed. There was nothing to be done. The doctor was sent for, also the Curé. "The man was dying;" "he was dead." "No, he still breathed." Then some one made an intelligent suggestion. "Look inside the bed." The bed-clothes pulled down revealed a dreadful sight, which explained at once what had happened. The whole bed was soaked in blood. A blood-vessel had burst in the wound and the man was bleeding to death. The bleeding was easily stopped by the application



L'HÔPITAL "106"

of a tourniquet, but it was doubtful if any man could live after the loss of so much blood. Doctor and Curé arrived together as No. 6 was beginning to come round. The tourniquet had been applied just in time.

No windows were left open during the night.

Café au lait came in next morning at 7.30, and was distributed by Pierre, the orderly, a most willing and really excellent fellow. During breakfast one window was opened about three inches. As soon as breakfast was over the window was closed, the breakfast things removed, and the nurse began to prepare for the morning's work.

Mme. Buquet, head nurse of the ward, wife of a well-known French surgeon, was assisted by two volunteers from Cambrai, Mlle. Marie and Mlle. X. The dressing of wounds is quite a simple, straightforward business when the wounds are clean, but it is a very different story when there is gangrenous infection. No. 1, "le Picard," whose bed was just opposite mine, gave no trouble; his stump had nearly healed up and required very little attention. A deal of time was given to No. 3, the Chasseur Alpin; the bullet wound had made a small hole just over the left nipple, and the dressing of it was most painful to watch, as the poor boy evidently suffered great agony, though he never cried out or complained. No. 6 provided what one might call "le pièce de résistance." He began to howl before he was

touched, and during the whole time his wounds were being dressed he continued either to shout or groan, or repeat his favourite exclamation, "Oh mon pied, mon pied!" Picard used to jeer at him for making so much fuss. "There is no one in the ward who makes such an infernal row as you do." No. 6 replied that no one in the ward suffered so much pain. This statement met with vigorous opposition from all over the room; even No. 3, who could scarcely breathe, was roused for the first time to husky speech. "Some of us suffer in silence: you should do likewise." In the heated discussion which followed No. 6 forgot for a time all about his bad foot. Poor No. 6 was in a minority of one. He was told that, though we were all very sorry for him, we objected to the continual groaning and shouting, which could do no good, and only disturbed those who suffered far worse pain in silence.

Nos. 8 and 9, the two beds nearest to mine, were the last to be dressed that morning. No. 9, whose bed was so close to mine that there was only just room between for the nurse to stand, was badly shot in the upper part of the thigh. The wound was in such a condition that there was no hope of recovery. A stream of dark-green gangrenous liquid poured out of the wound at the first washing. I covered up my head under the sheets and lit a cigarette, but even so could not escape from the sickening smell.

Owing to the serious condition of most of the wounded, the limited number of surgical instruments, and the cramped space in which the work had to be done, the dressing of wounds went on the whole morning, and was seldom finished before midday. During all this time the windows were kept shut, until just immediately before lunch, when one window was opened—not too wide, lest too much of the foul putrid atmosphere should escape and let in some of the clean air of a fresh autumn morning.

After lunch, M. le Médecin Chef Famechon and Capt. Viguié came to pay us a visit. The Médecin Chef is a man between sixty and seventy years of age, tall, straight as an arrow, dignified, reserved, almost austere in manner, *au fond* the kindest and best of men, as I found out later on from personal experience. He was taken prisoner at Arras, and now remained a prisoner in this hospital. Thus do the Germans observe the Geneva Convention.

The Médecin Chef and Captain Viguié shared a small room at the other side of the hospital. Viguié, who had formerly occupied my bed in Salle 5, used to come every morning to visit his old friends. The visits were always an occasion for the exchange of humour between Viguié and myself, in which combats Viguié, possessed of a Parisian quickness of repartee, always came off best. Perhaps it was the case as Mme. Buquet said, that I suffered from

"du retard dans la perception." We all used to tease Viguié, and I used to greet him in the morning as "vieux coco." "Dites donc, Monsieur l'Ecossais," was the usual answer; "nous n'avons pas gardé les cochons ensemble." It has taken nearly a year and a half to find the correct answer to this pleasantry —an answer which I could send to my friend in his German prison, only that the Boche might refuse to pass it. "Non, mon ami, mais nous avons été gardé ensemble par les cochons!"

My diary states that "on October 26th I got up in the evening and had dinner at the table. There is great excitement in the hospital on account of large bodies of German troops having passed through the town. This is supposed to be a retirement." This opinion was strengthened by the visit of a simple-minded citizen of Cambrai, who came in with the news that "Metz had fallen." Stupid stories such as these were believed for a time by a great many people. "The smell in my ward is not so strong to-night. I have succeeded in getting a window kept open."

"October 30th. M. Heloire, the Veterinary Surgeon from Caudry, came to see me yesterday." Perhaps it was because he was not wearing the white overall that I did not recognise the tall, erect, grey-bearded man, who stood at the door of the Salle cinq and looked anxiously round the ward. Presently he came over to my bedside and stood

M. VAMPOUILLE IN THE SALLE CINQ

looking. Then he spoke some commonplace, but not until he mentioned Caudry did I realise who it was. Labouring under a racial disability, I struggled to express my gratitude, but M. Heloire put an end to my efforts. With tears rolling down his cheeks he embraced me tenderly and thanked the *Bon Dieu* that I was still alive. "They said at Caudry that you had died on the way to Germany, and so I came to ask the truth as soon as I could get a permit." We talked of many things, and M. Heloire refreshed my memory as to many incidents of my short stay at Caudry which I had forgotten. He told me among other things that when I was carried on a stretcher out of La Maison Camille Wanecq and put into the cart, the villagers standing by, who were not quite sure if my immediate destination was to be the hospital or the churchyard, were overcome with astonishment at my exclaiming, as the stretcher was lifted on to the cart, "En route la marchandise!" "Every day," went on the old man, "for days after you had left, my little granddaughter, who is only eight years old, begged to be taken to the place where grandpère had found the poor wounded officer. One Sunday afternoon, when it was fine, we went for a walk along the road that you must so well remember—the cart road from Caudry to Beaumont. When we reached the place, the ditch by the roadside, where, the morning after the battle, after much searching, I found you lying,

my little girl, asking me to show her exactly where you had rested, picked from the spot some of the grass and a few common wild flowers to keep as a souvenir of grandpapa's wounded soldier."

On that same evening, after M. Heloire had gone, I made another friend, M. Vampouille, a Belgian, the proprietor of a small pork-butcher's business, Rue de l'Arbre d'Or, Cambrai. M. Vampouille worked in the hospital during the day when his business would permit, took one night a week in the Salle cinq, and was to me a faithful and devoted friend, to whom I never can hope to express as I would my admiration and deepest gratitude. Vampouille himself would be much astonished to hear me express such sentiments, for the kindness which always took thought and trouble, the tact and common-sense which made his companionship so agreeable, are natural virtues of which he is wholly unconscious.

At the 106 we had no restrictions as to visits; at all hours of the day numbers of people used to visit the wards, many came out of curiosity, and such visits were for me at any rate a penance, chiefly owing to the prevailing mania for shaking hands. At times whole families, dressed all in deep mourning, would drift into the room and stand awkwardly grouped at the foot of my bed. "Allons ma petite Françoise, va dire bonjour à ce brave soldat," and the whole tribe would come, one after

the other, to perform the ceremony of "le shake-hand." After this function followed the inevitable question, "Where were you wounded?"

My method of dealing with this question always amused Mme. Buquet.

"Où avez-vous été blessé?"

"A Caudry."

"Oui! mais à quel endroit avez-vous été blessé?"

"A l'entrée du village!"

"Oui, mais dans quelle parti avez-vous été blessé?"

"In the head, that is why I wear these bandages."

"Go, Françoise, say au revoir to the poor wounded soldier."

The function of le shake-hand having been re-enacted by each member of the family, they passed on to the next bed.

I had many friends whose welcome visits helped to break the monotony of hospital life. Mlle. Waxin and Mlle. Debu used sometimes to come and talk to their old "Numéro Sept," and tell me all the latest news. From them I first heard of poor Captain Lloyd, an English officer very seriously wounded, who occupied my old room in the Hôpital Civil. I wrote a short note to Lloyd, expressing my sympathy, and next morning, when Dr. Debu made his daily visit to the ward, I asked him to take it back with him.

There must be some special department of the

German Staff solely occupied with the task of thinking out new things to make *verboten*. It is incredible, but true, that the Germans had forbidden any intercommunication between wounded and dying soldiers in the different hospitals, and so my correspondence with Lloyd was carried on secretly through the kind offices of Madame Buquet. Owing to her knowledge of German, Mme. Buquet was able to obtain a permit to visit the Hôpital Civil, and every day at 2 P.M., instead of taking her daily walk, she went to visit poor Lloyd, who was feeling rather lonely, and longed, as he said in one of his letters, to talk once more to a fellow-countryman.

It was after dinner on All Saints' Day, November 1, that I made my first attempt to walk without any one's help. I got outside the ward and along to a door which led into the courtyard. The night was clear and still, the wind cold and restless. I stood awhile on the wet gravel of the court, looking up once again at the clouds playing among stars by the light of a rising moon.

"Vous n'êtes pas fou," said a voice from the doorway. "We looked for you everywhere; you will catch your death of cold out there in the dark."

"You cannot understand," I replied, "how good it feels to stand once more on the soil of the earth and look up into the heavens."

Two of the worst cases, Nos. 8 and 9, were taken away during the night to the Civil Hospital for a

fruitless operation. In the afternoon, it being La Fête des Mortes, Madame Buquet went to the military cemetery. Even the frozen soul of a German staff officer could not forbid the citizens of Cambrai to visit their dead.

In the military cemetery of Cambrai, visited on this day by crowds of mourners, the French and British soldiers are buried together in a common tomb, under a single wooden cross. There are several such tombs in the cemetery, and each to-day is covered with wreaths. A row of long black crosses, with name and regiment painted in white on each, marks the resting-place of the officers. The same order prevails in the German quarter of the churchyard.

In all the surrounding countryside at Caudry, at Le Cateau, in village churchyards, in open fields by country roadsides, beside the plain wooden cross which marks the soldier's grave, some one to-day has laid a wreath and knelt in prayer.

At this time large numbers of troops were constantly passing through the city, coming from the direction of St. Quentin and leaving in that of Valenciennes, from which point they proceeded to reinforce actual or impending attacks on Arras and Ypres. According to the universal opinion of Cambrai, the departure of the Germans from the city was to be expected at any moment.

The sound of the cannonade at Arras could be

heard quite distinctly, and when the wind was favourable the boom of the big guns seemed nearer than ever. "They were coming nearer," said the citizens of Cambrai with mutual congratulations. The inevitable morning salutation now became, "Bonjour, bonjour; the guns sounded nearer last night and they will soon be here—listen! comme ça roule."

A gentle westerly wind carried to our ears the sound of the distant guns, like an echo of a distant thunderstorm.

One evening, late in November, a still clear night, when the cannonade could be heard more distinctly than usual, Captain Viguié and I stood out in the yard for a long time listening. To the long loud rumble of the German cannon we could hear, after an interval, a faint and more distant answer—an answer that spoke, as it were, in another tongue. It was the French 75!

It was obvious to those who did not yield to vain hopes that the German occupation of Cambrai was being organised on a permanent basis. Very few German soldiers remained billeted in the town. Numbers of them were constantly coming back on short leave from the front, and from them the story of the new trench war gradually became known to us all.

The Military Governor of Cambrai occupied the Town Hall, now known as the Kommandantur.

The French préfet having fled the city on the approach of the enemy, a successor was appointed by the Kommandant, and the administration of the city proceeded under German supervision and according to the usual German methods. Edicts were published at regular intervals declaring some new thing to be verboten, and always under penalty of death. Such things as bicycles and sewing-machines were requisitioned and might not be retained under penalty of death. Any person at Cambrai or in the district found, after a certain date, in possession of pigeons of any kind would be condemned to death.

The old Cathedral had belonged for years to the pigeons, who, suspecting no danger, fell an easy prey, and for several days afforded fine game to the German sportsmen. Mlle. Marie, who passed the Cathedral every morning on her way to the hospital, told me that there were still a few survivors who, having learnt the lesson of their comrades' fate, circled high round the Cathedral tower or remained anxiously perched on some lofty gargoyle.

The "Cambrai" pigeons were presented to the Hôpital 106 by the Secretary of the Kommandantur, and thus did not meet with the final indignity of being eaten by the enemy.

A typical illustration of German morality is afforded by an edict which was published in Cambrai towards the end of November. All able-bodied

Frenchmen were ordered to present themselves at the Kommandantur on a certain date, and were to be sent to Lille to dig trenches. Only a small number of men presented themselves on the appointed day, and were offered the job of digging trenches at five francs per day. Those who refused would be sent to Germany. Not more than twenty or thirty men accepted the proffered wage, and the remainder were sent to a German prison. Owing to the failure of the citizens to respond in sufficient numbers to this demand, the town of Cambrai was fined a large sum of money.

A declaration, printed in French and German, of which I have seen a copy, was posted all over Cambrai under the heading, "Who is responsible for this Terrible War—ENGLAND." Only the German mind could have produced such an extraordinary document, in which England is accused, among other crimes, of "having abandoned Belgium to her fate." Most of the French population of Cambrai were much entertained by the clumsy anti-British propaganda which emanated from the Kommandantur.

Another large poster appeared in all parts of the town stating that the British had been convicted of using Dumdum bullets. A British rifle, with ammunition, was on show in a shop window in the market-place, and the German soldier in charge explained to those who stopped to look that the hollow thumb-

piece of the cut-off of the British rifle had been designed explicitly for the purpose of manufacturing dumdum bullets. By inserting the point of a bullet into the recess and giving the cartridge a rapid jerk, the pointed end broke, leaving a square ragged surface.

In their dealings with the civilian population of Cambrai the Germans showed how they utterly failed to understand the French mind.

Salle cinq vastly enjoyed the visit of a certain German officer who came ostensibly to inspect, but in reality for purposes of propaganda. The man's name is unknown to me. He was always referred to among ourselves as *l'imbécile*. He was so short of stature that the long Prussian cloak reached almost to the ground, and a more fatuous face I have seldom seen on any man. He spoke French fluently but ungrammatically, and with a pronounced German accent. "Ponjour, Matame; here we are all French, is it not? Your so beautiful Paris I so much admire." The "imbecile," having gone round the ward, stood at the bottom of my bed facing the centre of the room, and entered into amiable conversation with Mme. Buquet and the other nurses.

He held forth at some length on the amenities of Cambrai, and expressed delight that the fortunes "of this terrible war" had been the occasion of his meeting and learning to love still more the French people, whom he had always held in such esteem.

"It is not the French who are the real enemies of Germany. If we had not been forced to do so by the treacherous English, never would we have invaded the soil of France. Ah, those English, what barbarians, what uncultured savages, such different types from those I see around me here!"

At this point Mme. Buquet, catching my wink from behind the "imbecile's" back, nearly exploded with laughter, which she, however, managed to turn into a coughing fit, and the Salle cinq listened eagerly for more.

We heard the whole pathetic story of how Germany had been goaded into the war. Paris now was safe. The German armies thirsted solely for English blood. When England had been crushed, then France and Germany would fall into each other's arms and all would be forgiven and forgotten.

The "imbecile" departed, satisfied that he had sown good seed. Mme. Buquet, with tears rolling down her cheeks, was too exhausted for laughter. The Salle cinq remained silent for a while, stunned by this wonderful exhibition of stupidity.

Picard, the one-legged soldier, idiomatically expressed the thought of the Salle. "Eh bien, il n'a pas peur celui là," which remark might be translated: "Fools rush in where angels fear to tread."

The Inspecting Officer, who came round every two or three days, was General Oberarzt Schmidt. In addition to this more or less regular visit, there

was another doctor named Meyer, who was charged with making up lists of "transportables." Every one naturally wished to put off the evil hour of departure to Germany as long as possible, especially as hopes were still entertained by many that the French troops would drive the Germans out before Christmas. Meyer only paid one visit to the Salle cinq, on which occasion its inhabitants appeared all to be on the point of death!

The list of Salle cinq showed that there were ten French and one British. Meyer stopped at the foot of my bed and turned his cold cod-fish eyes at me. His finger reached for pencil and note-book. Mme. Buquet saved my name from going on his list by declaring that my paralysis was such that I could neither move nor speak. The cod-fish eyes looked hard at me: "Können Sie Deutsch verstehen?" I gazed at him with dropped jaw and vacant eyes, shaking my head very slightly. There were no "transportables" that day from the Salle cinq.

Meyer was cordially detested by the whole hospital staff, by reason of the contemptuous insolence of his manner. His hatred of the English was fanatical. Mme. Buquet once asked him if there was any prospect of an exchange. "Of the French, yes," he replied; "of the English, never!"

General Oberarzt Schmidt, a very different type, was a tall, big-framed, and full-bodied man, large in the belly, bulging at the neck, with a pinky-red

face and a large square head, bald on top, fringed with short-cut grey-blond hair. He spoke no English, and only a half-dozen words of French. It would be difficult to find an attractive feature in the face of General Oberarzt Schmidt. The large mouth which droops shapelessly to one side is decorated on the upper lip with a few clipped badly-grown blue-grey bristles. The eyes, small and shifting, are almost colourless. Whatever his true character may have been, to us at the 106 he was always courteous and well-behaved. He used to come to the Salle cinq every week, and often remained to talk to Mme. Buquet, who, owing to her fluent knowledge of German, was able to obtain from Dr. Schmidt a certain amount of latitude regarding the question of the "transportables." It was thanks to Mme. Buquet that the two French captains, whose wounds were completely healed, were able to remain at 106 for several weeks after they were fit to travel.

At the Hôpital Civil, the German weekly inspection, when carried out by such men as Grigou, was a merciless visitation, and for those whose names went on the list there was no reprieve. But at the 106 we suffered from no such unreasoning severity. Doctor Schmidt was often induced to postpone the departure of any soldier really unfit for the journey.

" 'Tetanus' made the night hideous with groaning and moaning, so that no one could get any

sleep." This entry in my diary refers to a young Breton soldier who was isolated in a room opposite the Salle cinq. The word "room" gives a wholly wrong impression of the place where this unfortunate man had to be put. In one corner stood an old and useless bath, in another two broken bedsteads; the rough flooring was littered with rubbish. The walls had never been papered, the plaster still hung in patches, cracked and yellow with damp. A wooden partition half-way up to the ceiling divided the place off from the corridor, and thus the moans of the dying man could be heard distinctly in our room. There was no other accommodation in the hospital wherein a patient, such as this one, could be isolated. Tetanus was very common at Cambrai. We had eight cases at the Hôpital Civil, six of which died. Very little treatment could be given, as there was no anti-tetanus serum to be had. The horror of tetanus is unique, for there is no disease so insidious, so sudden in its effects, and so terrible in its end.

For three days the man lived in a semi-unconscious condition. The first evening we could hear him moaning, a low, steady, pitiful moan. About the middle of the night there was a sudden silence, then a crash, and a sound of struggling. M. Vampouille, who was on duty that night in our ward, rushed across the corridor and, by the light of a match, bent over the man's bed. It was empty!

From the middle of the room came again the low moaning sound; the unfortunate man had struggled out of bed in a fit. The stitches of his leg, which was amputated above the knee, had burst, and he lay in a pool of blood. M. Vampouille's further description of the scene is too awful to dwell upon. From that evening of November 4 until the morning of November 7, almost without a stop day and night, there came from that room the most mournful lamentation, loud, deep, and sonorous, though it came through teeth clenched in the rigor of the dreadful disease. Through locked jaws and motionless lips came the sound that expressed the sole thought of his mind. There is no phrase or turn of writing that can express the pitiful, appealing, struggling effort of the dying soldier to articulate this dying call for his mother. For three days and three nights, first strong and loud, then weaker and weaker, his constant call was "Maman, Maman," expressed in this awful moaning. On the third day I went in to see him. A nurse was attempting to force some warm milk between his teeth, but with no success. It was better to let him die in peace. He did not look more than nineteen. Sweat ran in trickles down the pale face wrinkled in agony. His thick black hair fell low down over clammy forehead and temple. The blue-grey eyes stared fixed and sightless. The moaning was now low and weak, but one could hear that the call was still for

"Maman, Maman." Early next morning I woke while it was still dark, sat up in bed and listened. From somewhere in the hospital there came a swishing, gurgling sound very like the whistling noise of a turbine engine. Still half asleep, I sat wondering what kind of engine it could be. When day dawned the swishing, whistling noise had ceased, and the suffering of the poor Breton boy was over. Mme. Buquet was very late in coming to the ward that morning. She told me that the last few minutes before the end were quite peaceful. M. le Vicaire-Général administered the Last Sacraments, and Captain Viguié spoke in the dying man's ear the only earthly consolation that remained: "Mon garçon, tu meurs pour la France."

In many respects life in the Salle cinq now began to be much easier. As a result of my insistent propaganda in favour of fresh air, I obtained some small concessions, and succeeded in obtaining a number of adherents to the policy of the open window. The worst cases in the ward had been taken away; those that were left gradually got better, and even No. 6 in the corner began to improve. In the afternoon I played bridge with the French captain and some other friends who used to pay me regular visits, or discussed the gossip and news of the town with Vampouille. First of all there was that most excellent M. Herbin, a big, strong, hearty man, certainly well past fifty, with honest brown eyes that

looked you straight in the face, showing that his heart was in the right place, as the saying is. My friend was a man of few words. "Allons, mon pauvre vieux, ça va bien hein! la santé?" "Très bien, mon cher ami." "Tant mieux. Tant mieux." And the Boches? We used to talk of them.

Cambrai was like a city stricken by the plague. Most of the shops had their shutters up. No one went abroad for pleasure, one stayed at home these days; and the "place publique," with its German military band which played every day at 4 o'clock, the café where one used to take the evening "Pernod"—such places were now the haunt of the Boche.

M. Herbin owned a draper's shop, his specialty was ready-made clothes, and his business was practically at an end. At the time there was very little cash in circulation at Cambrai. Notes for 1, 2, and 5 francs were issued by the Town and the Chamber of Commerce, with an inscription stating that "this note will be cashed by the Chamber of Commerce 100 days after the signature of peace." The German usually paid for everything with "bons de réquisition." These vouchers were guaranteed by the German Government only when stamped by the Kommandantur.

During the first few weeks of the German occupation officers and men made a practice of entering shops, taking whatever suited their fancy, and then, by way of payment, offering the helpless tradesman

GENERAL OBERARZT SCHMIDT, KÖNIGLICHE ERSTE BAYRISCHE RESERVE CORPS

a scrap of paper covered with unintelligible hieroglyphics. These scraps of paper were absolutely worthless. It was the German idea of humour thus to rob the unfortunate tradesman by presenting him in return for his merchandise with a written statement certifying "the bearer of this is a silly fool." A still more Germanic humour found its expression in coarse vulgar filth. When the bewildered shopkeepers brought their promises to pay to the Kommandantur for verification they were greeted with jeering laughter. German humour finds its happiest element in all that concerns the lowest functions of the body, and doubtless the story of such vulgar jests at the expense of a helpless enemy were repeated with much gusto by the elegant fraus of the Fatherland.

Among other visitors whom I was always glad to see were M. et Mme. Ray. The latter used to come to the Salle twice a week during the afternoons, so that Mme. Buquet could get off duty. Mme. Ray was an incorrigible optimist. Every movement of German troops, whether entering or leaving Cambrai, she always referred to as a retirement. Whenever the wind changed and the sound of guns was more distinctly heard—the French were advancing. On Christmas day, she used to tell me, we will be "in France." I rather think that these opinions were expressed for the purpose of cheering up the Salle cinq, for Mme. Ray was too sensible a woman

in other matters to be in reality so lacking in judgment in this particular case.

M. Vampouille came every afternoon, except when detained by his business, which at this time consisted chiefly in killing pigs to make sausages for the German soldiers—sausages which they had to pay for in hard cash, as Vampouille always refused to deal in vouchers. My kind friend never came to see me without a "surprise," a little parcel which he brought in his pocket—a slice of "pâté," or ham, or "saucisson à l'aile," and many other tit-bits.

During these days there was a great scarcity of decent tobacco, although there was plenty of what was called "Belgian tobacco." It is difficult to suggest what this stuff might have been. It was sold in large square parcels, covered with blue paper, labelled "Tabac Belge," and cost one franc for a very large-sized packet. Once a week a woman came into the hospital yard bearing on her back a large basketful of tobacco, cigars, and matches with which she had travelled on foot from Belgium. The cigars only cost three sous for two. I never made any attempt to smoke them, but once out of curiosity I dissected one and made a strange discovery. The outside leaf was cabbage, stained dark-brown; it came off quite easily and disclosed a second and a third cabbage leaf of a light yellow colour. Inside these three layers of cabbage leaf was a hard rolled

cylinder which, as it would not unroll, I cut into two pieces with a sharp knife. The cylinder was filled with small shavings and dust, whether from fag-ends of cigarettes or merely from street sweepings, it was impossible to tell. I have seen a soldier achieve the wonderful feat of smoking one of these cigars to its hot and bitter end. This was Picard, the one-legged man of Salle cinq—Pĭcard, who smoked all day and most of the night, quite indifferent as to the substance he put into his clay pipe as long as it would produce smoke.

M. Vampouille succeeded where many other friends had failed. He found a supply of "English Tobacco." A patriotic marchande de tabac had buried the most valuable part of her stock in a back garden rather than let the Boches have the advantage. There were three four-ounce tins of Craven Mixture and three boxes of cigars "Bock." It was indeed a luxury to smoke real tobacco and real cigars.

"First flakes of snow. Result, windows shut tight day and night. Next day a stove was put into the middle of the room, which is now so stuffy that one can hardly breathe even with the windows open. To-day, November 16, I began to walk with two sticks."

My good friends, the two French officers, had at last to go, and it was a very sad day for us all. The list of transportables, a short one, included five or

six French soldiers. They made a very sad picture as they limped painfully out into the yard and were helped up to a seat in the ambulance, each one carrying on his back a large bundle containing socks, a shirt, and as much meat and bread as could be taken by a wounded man on such a journey. Mme. Buquet went down to the station with the two captains. We were glad to hear that they were given good berths in a hospital train, and thus were able to make the long three days' journey in comparative comfort—a good fortune which in those days was invariably denied to British officers, even when very severely wounded.

On 25th November I got away from the ward and the fruitless struggle for fresh air by taking Captain Viguié's bed in the tiny little room shared with le Médecin Chef. The room was long and narrow—perhaps 20 feet by 5,—with only just room for two beds, the washing-stand, and a small table where the doctor and I used to sit and play piquet—a game at which I had neither skill nor luck, for when our games came to an end the doctor had scored over 5000 points to the good! A welcome interruption to our card-playing was the visit of Mme. de Rudnickna, a charming Polish lady who was nurse at the Hôpital Notre Dame, where she for many months nursed two British officers—Major Johnson and Lieut. Foljambe, both very seriously wounded. She saved Lieut. Foljambe's life by careful nursing,

when the doctors had given up hope, and she did everything that could be done to make easier the slow decline of Major Johnson, who, mortally wounded in the spine, lived till the first day of 1915. Mme. de Rudnickna came two or three times a week with a delicious "Chausson au pommes," and sometimes a bottle of Vin d'Oporto to liven up the grey, dull winter afternoons. One day she brought me a copy of 'The Times' for November 19th, the first English newspaper I had seen since August 12th.

In a much-thumbed copy of the 'Figaro,' dated October 25th—a copy which, it was said, had been dropped from an aeroplane, and which we secretly circulated from ward to ward—we read the story of Ypres, vague reports of which we had heard from German soldiers, who were told by their chiefs, and firmly believed, that the objective now before them was first Calais and then London. We heard that, once Calais had fallen—and who could doubt that it would fall?—the famous big guns that had done such deeds at Liége and Antwerp would batter down the defences of Dover and sweep a passage across the Channel for the German troop-ships. It was Bismarck, I think, who, looking over London from the top of St. Paul's, exclaimed regretfully, "Was für Plünder!" On this "Plünder" the mind of the German was now fixed; and soldiers billeted in the town talked

grandly of the punishment to be inflicted on England for having treacherously hatched a cowardly plot for the destruction of the German Empire.

The bulletin of war news, posted up each morning outside the Kommandantur, boasted each day of the capture of countless Russian and French prisoners. One day in November the Cathedral bells were rung to celebrate the victory of German arms in the East. All such official displays of cheerfulness could not hide from our observant notice that all was not well with the German armies. The glorious victories always took place at the other end of Europe.

But nothing was published officially about the military situation on the Western front. German soldiers back from the trenches of Arras spoke bitterly of their failure to capture the French positions. Rumour said that the German casualties between Arras and Ypres amounted to over 100,000 killed. Arras was known to us as "Le Tombeau des Allemands." Reports from Valenciennes told of crowded hospitals, train-loads of wounded, and train-loads of dead. Somewhere behind the line of battle, not very far from Cambrai, there are large brick-fields. Here it was that a crematorium was built. A tale was told of trains that passed in the night, of open trucks in which men, limp and with nodding heads, stood upright, packed in close array. By the light of some dim country station lamp the

corpses in their blue-grey uniform had been seen and recognised, though hidden by blood and earth, fresh from the field on which they had fallen. Even for the Boches this was too horrible an end, to travel in such manner to the grave, strung together like bundles of asparagus.

At times it would seem as if Martin Luther was right when he wrote in 1527 that the Germans are "a heathenish, nay utterly bestial, nation." But I do not hold with the judgment of this first apostle of frightfulness. The German nation consists of the High Command, with its hordes of obedient slave-drivers, and the rest of the nation, which in the inner chambers of the High Command is referred to as the mob—die Menge. The High Command is certainly heathenish, and may be looked upon as utterly bestial, in view of the fact that they have replaced the elementary principles of honour by some sort of jungle law of their own making.

But there are still symptoms of humanity left in the mob, something of human sympathy and of the brotherhood of man, which even at Cambrai made itself felt on rare occasions. Such an occasion was a visit to the Salle cinq of Herr Arntz. It was at the time when I was confined to bed, as much by the fear of Germany as by the paralysis, and on one of the darkest days of November. Mme. Buquet sat by my bedside, as she often used to do of an afternoon when the day's work was over, and spoke

of a German who had called at the hospital a few days before, asking for her by name. He had stood out in the corridor waiting for her to come, bare headed, closely cropped, in the uniform of a private soldier, and not until he spoke did she recognise a friend. They had not met for three years, and the place of their parting—the Black Forest in the spring-time. Herr Arntz, then a young student in chemistry on his holiday tour, had now passed his degree as Doctor der Chemie. In spite of weak eyesight and the wearing of blue spectacles, he had been called up shortly after the outbreak of war, and was doing railway duty at Cambrai. So much and more had Mme. Buquet told me of her friend on that afternoon when he came again to see her.

It was cold, dark, and inhospitable in the corridor, and she brought him into the Salle cinq, where the gas lamps, which had just been lit, gave the room a touch of homely comfort. Perhaps it was the Numéro 6 who had called for morphia, or some other wounded man who required attention, so that Mme. Buquet left her friend sitting alone not very far from my bedside. I cherish no friendly feeling towards any Boche, yet there was something about this one which commanded my attention. This was not the manner of our usual German visitors—to sit there quietly and as if ashamed.

I started conversation with a hybrid sentence in French and German, which encouraged Herr Arntz to draw up his chair closer to my bed. There was nothing remarkable in the subject of our conversation. His attitude towards the war was that of a fatalist towards an earthquake; he showed a real sympathy for my state of health and the effect of my wound, choosing strange and almost unintelligible phrases in his efforts to speak the French tongue.

"Ah, mais 'le cerf' il n'est pas touché," then you will get well. That was good. And to me when I would speak of der Krieg, "let us forget it for a moment." How could this quiet gentleman and I, lying sick, be at war? Was it indeed wrong, as many said at the 106, thus to converse with a Boche? Should I have refused my hand at parting? My friend, so I must call him for his kindness, lies in an honourable grave somewhere along the long battle line. A year later, promoted from guarding railway stations, blue spectacles and all, he "fell at the head of his company." One of the mob—die Menge.

St. Andrew's Day.—Captain Lloyd is very much worse. Mme. Buquet goes to see him every day at 2 P.M., carrying a note from me and a custard pudding made by Mme. Tondeur. There was never a more motherly soul than Mme. Tondeur. And there never was a cook so excellent and yet so good-

tempered, so pestered with visitors in the kitchen, yet always smiling and with a kind word for each one. Wounded men able to hobble out of the Salle cinq, or down from the other wards upstairs, loved to sit in a corner of her kitchen and peel potatoes or wash dishes and listen to the day's gossip. What with nurses and orderlies, stray visitors from the town, soldiers on crutches, all congregating in the kitchen, which might have been the H.Q. of the hospital, it was indeed a wonder that Mme. Tondeur could produce such an excellent dinner.

When M. Vampouille, of his own idea and specially to please me, cured a piece of bacon à l'anglaise, Mme. Tondeur and I put our heads together over the cooking of bacon and eggs. The simple barbarity of English cooking is always puzzling to French people. My dish, which started on the range as bacon and eggs, arrived on the table as an omelette au jambon.

What a sordid thing is a boiled potato in comparison with "des pommes frites"! We had fried potatoes one day a week, on which occasion all available hands were turned on to the work of peeling and slicing, no unskilled labour, when wastage is not to be endured. For every ward there was a large dish piled high, golden, crisp, and scalding hot and appetising—good to take with one's fingers like fine pastry, very different from the soppy, flaccid, colourless British imitation.

TAKEN AT L'HÔPITAL NOTRE DAME, CAMBRAI, OCTOBER, 1914

Every morning Mme. Tondeur prepared the custard pudding in a small dish, which was then wrapped up in a napkin ready to be carried by Mme. Buquet to our poor friend at the Hôpital Civil. "Ah, mon Lieutenant," she used to say, "what a joy it is to do something to help, even if so little. I also have a son in the trenches, and I pray le bon Dieu to send him back to me, even with a leg or an arm less I would not complain. Si seulement je le savais comme vous!"

Here in England, far from the presence of war, it is impossible to realise the suffering of these unfortunate people in the North of France who have never been allowed to get news from the trenches, who will not know of the death of husband or son for months and years after. No correspondence is allowed even with neutral countries. Though the land under German occupation is a place of misery and desolation, it has one redeeming feature—there are no pseudo-conscientious objectors. German invasion and occupation of Britain would not be too high a price to pay for the extirpation of this national dry-rot.

One who has lived long months among these despairing people writes to say how hard it is for those outside the German zone to realise the misery of invasion. "Old men and little children work in the fields with neither horses nor oxen nor ploughs. In many places German soldiers plough and sow,

desecrating the soil of France. . . . And when in France I hear it said that the war is without end, that the strain is too great, I think of those who live in the invaded districts, those who are exiled from France under the enemy yoke and yet do not despair, but wait with patient confidence for the hour of deliverance; perhaps they have some right to say the strain is hard to bear."

I do not envy the man, be he ploughman, starred tradesman, or merely possessed of a sickly conscience, who can apply for leave to stay at home, while old men and little children till the fields of Northern France without horses, oxen, or ploughs, under the hard rule of the Hun.

We were a sad party on that St. Andrew's Day at the Hôpital 106. Mme. Buquet came in the afternoon rather later than usual to the little room, where the old Colonel and I sat playing piquet, bringing sad news from the Civil Hospital. Poor Captain Lloyd was not expected to live more than a few hours.

We sat silently while the twilight melted into darkness. When a friend is dying those that watch and busy themselves with small services can find therein some small consolation. But we, weighed down in mind, powerless to influence in any degree the inevitable order of fate, found the pattern of the universe a hard reading.

To die is unimportant and common to all, the

GERMANY AT HOME! A MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL STAFF AT CAMBRAI

only important thing is the manner of our leaving. Captain Lloyd, my friend whom I have never seen, showed how the spirit of a man can rise above the saddest catastrophe of war and throw a gleam of light on the apparently hopeless and senseless maze of human misery.

Mme. Buquet used to come every afternoon straight back to my room after her visit to the Hôpital Civil, and her report to me never varied. "He never speaks of himself, but asks insistently for news of you." His eyes lit up on hearing that I could walk with crutches. "Do tell him to be careful and not try too much;" and to-day, and on this sad St. Andrew's Day, his last words to Mme. Buquet showed the full measure of unselfish thoughtfulness: "Do not let him worry, do not let him know how weak I am."

It was quite dark when M. Vampouille came in. He would not suffer the darkness even after hearing the sad story, but lit the gas and kept a cheery manner. "It is something to know," said he, "that there are 'de si braves gens de par ce monde.'"

St. Andrew's Feast was not forgotten that evening. Monsieur Vampouille had brought me a scarce and much-valued delicacy which was prepared with special care by Mme. Tondeur and served up at dinner as a savoury. There was no escape from the six large healthy snails sitting in their shells enthroned on pieces of toast soaked in

oil and vinegar mixed with chopped onions and garlic.

From Mme. Buquet there was a flower-pot with some early primroses and a note, "To the Scotch Lieutenant on St. Andrew's Feast Day."

These gracious incidents, as R. L. Stevenson remarked, are distinctive of the French people, and "make the ordinary moments of life ornamental."

Also I had almost conquered my insular prejudice against the eating of snails, which are really quite succulent when served with such a sauce.

CHAPTER V

STORIES FROM LE NUMÉRO 106

BEHIND one of the hospital wings there is a tiny garden walled in on all sides by high buildings. Here were some mouldy-looking pear-trees, a ragged gooseberry bush, and a patch of ragged cabbage-stalks. The ground was thickly covered with rotten leaves; in one corner empty broken rabbit-hutches, pieces of broken furniture, broken bottles, and miscellaneous *débris* gave an additional note of depression. Still it was a change from the dulness of the courtyard, and the garden, such as it was, became the object of my daily excursions. The gardener, now digging trenches in some distant part of France, might never dig here again, but his two little children played at soldiers every afternoon among the decayed leaves. A large shed at the end of the garden, which had at one time been used as a wash-house, now falling to ruin, still contained a rusty boiler and some broken wash-tubs. In one corner, piled one on top of the other, stood six or seven roughly-hewn coffins made out of old packing-cases.

Le Picard was often a partner in these explorations round the dead garden, and together we visited the coffins. "Ça voyez vous," said this one-legged philosopher, "ça c'est le dernier costume."

Entrance to the hospital through an archway under the building was barred by a massive wooden *portail*. One morning, when the bread-cart had left the gateway open, Picard and I took up our stand on the threshold and looked out into the street. The houses opposite the hospital are modern and uninteresting, walls covered with dirty white plaster, shutters closed and in need of paint. Farther down on the right, as you stand at the hospital door, the street, as it nears the Place Publique, begins to curve, and here were old houses with their quaint roofs grouped picturesquely against the dull sky, where heavy clouds prepared to renew their steady downpour.

The street was empty. Farther down there are shops, but they are closed. A German soldier came clattering along the pavement. Just as he reached the hospital we two standing at the door caught his eye and aroused his curiosity to such an extent that he stopped, stared for a moment, then walked backwards for quite a long way and nearly bumped into an officer. A few sad-looking women, carrying baskets and bundles, stopped in the middle of the street and feasted their eyes on Picard. "It stirs the heart," said they, "to see the French uniform."

These poor people made a collection of their scarce sous and presented Picard with one franc fifty. The children gathered in such numbers that I had to ask them to move on for fear of the Germans.

After the children had gone, a little girl, perhaps ten or eleven years old, came shyly up to the door. Under a threadbare cloak, which in the cold wind and rain afforded small protection to her tired little body, she carried a bundle of picture post-cards. Her present errand was not concerned with asking for charity. She came quite near without speaking or looking up, and stretched out a thin grimy little hand to give me a two-sous piece. Having given me the two sous and rendered me speechless with mixed emotions, she turned to run, but Picard stopped her. "Wilt thou not show us the pretty post-cards, my little one?" "That I cannot do," came the resolute answer; "they are not mine to give away, and they cost two sous each to buy." But I, being obviously the possessor of two sous, was allowed to see the post-cards, and in exchange for my two-sous piece chose a view of the Place Publique.

At this time the army of occupation at Cambrai was the 6th Bavarians. On the whole, the behaviour of the Bavarian soldiers was excellent. Cases of rioting and drunkenness were rare, and we heard no stories of atrocities such as the Germans were guilty of in Belgium.

Picard and I stood at the hospital gate every morning for several days in succession, and in no case were we greeted with insults, although I found later on from personal experience that even a severely crippled enemy was not safe from the insulting jests of a German soldier. Of course we always saluted any officer who passed, and our salute was always punctiliously returned. Sometimes a private soldier saluted, and one day two tall bearded reservists stopped, crossed the street, and gave me a packet of cigarettes. Next morning we found the gate closed. A note had been sent from the Kommandatur stating that "it was forbidden for soldiers to stand at the door of the hospital." The watchful "Verboten Department" scored another point and deprived us of a harmless amusement.

A German orderly came on the 17th December with the following strange message: "The General is coming to inspect the hospital, and wishes to know if the Scotch officer would be good enough to wear his uniform." Being deficient of sporran, glengarry, kilt apron, S.B. belt, brogues, and spats, my "uniform" consisted of the khaki tunic, kilt, kilt pin, hose-tops and flashes, grey woollen socks, and black cloth snow-boots. On a black glengarry made by M. Herbin to my design I wore the cap badge, which I had fortunately taken off and put in my pocket when sitting in the trenches on the

morning of the 26th August. I was making the best of this strange equipment when the arrival of the General and his Staff was announced. They were waiting for me in the corridor outside the Salle cinq. The picture of this group of German Staff officers is one not easily forgotten. I turned slowly in at the door with crutch and stick, laboriously dragging one leg after another, rested against the wall, and saluted. Among the group I recognised Dr. Meyer, scowling and ill at ease; also General Oberarzt Schmidt, who, eager to show me off as being his own particular prize, was at once snubbed by the General, and subsided into a dignified silence. These Staff officers were all big heavy men of the usual German type, but the General, small, slimly built, with a light grey moustache, had an air of distinction that was almost French. His manner also was tactful and dignified.

After a preliminary question about my health and inquiry as to my white hair, which I had to explain was probably due partly to shock and partly to my head having been so long bandaged up, the conversation got beyond the little German I possessed, and one of the big Staff officers came to the rescue in fluent but guttural English. They could not believe that the kilt was worn in the winter-time, and seemed to think that it was only a parade uniform. Many questions were asked about the advantages of the kilt as fighting kit. I said that it was a very

adaptable uniform, good both for fighting and for running away. This remark was recognised to be a joke, and translated as such to the General. I was asked how many regiments in Scotland wore the kilt, and if all the Highland regiments were composed of Highlanders.

"No," I said in reply to another question, "we do not wear trousers even in winter."

"Schrecklich kalt im winter," they repeated, nodding at each other suspiciously.

With a polite wish for my speedy recovery the General intimated that the parade was at an end. The Staff clicked its heels and saluted—even Meyer had to swallow his hate and follow the example of the senior officers.

Outside the corridor, Mme. la Directrice and some of the nurses were standing at the foot of the stairs ready to accompany the officers round the hospital, but the General passed by and went out into the court without taking any notice.

The inspection was over.

A lady who lives near .Caudry came to see me. She told me that the graves of the British soldiers, both in the churchyard and in the fields around the village, are well cared for by the villagers, and that a large number of identity discs had, with the consent of the German authorities, been locked up at the Mairie. Near the little wood between Audencourt and Caudry, on the spot where we had dug

our trenches on the morning of the 26th August, there are buried seventeen soldiers and three officers.

About the middle of December the Médecin Chef was taken away to Germany.

A number of causes now contributed to make life at the 106 wholly unendurable. An entire absence of discipline among the hospital orderlies and the constant squabbling of the nurses had been points which the doctor and I used often to discuss and deplore. Now that the restraining influence of the doctor's age and rank was no longer with us, the evils of disorganisation became every day more apparent. The "Directrice," or head matron of the hospital, was wholly incapable, and by her tactless mismanagement set the whole hospital by the ears. The orderlies grew noisier and more slovenly every day. Youths who had no occupation in the hospital, and only appeared at meal-times, were allowed to air their opinions in endless discussion. Noisy, chattering visitors strolled in at all hours of the day, and there was no corner of the hospital safe from invasion. Quarrels among the nurses reached such a stage of bitterness that many were not on speaking terms. Friends whose kind visits I had always welcomed now came rarely or not at all. It was evident that such a state of affairs portended something more serious than tactlessness or mismanagement. The gossips of Cambrai were busy with many stories to the dis-

credit of Mme. la Directrice, but it seemed to me unreasonable that the voice of scandal should be concerned with a plain-looking woman the wrong side of forty. The whole affair may have been merely foolishness and vanity, but it was certainly an indiscretion on the part of Mme. la Directrice to receive in the courtyard of the 106 Hospital, from the hand of a German orderly, bouquets of white chrysanthemums presented with the compliments of a German officer.

Every morning at 11 o'clock I paid a visit to the Salle cinq. Many of the older inhabitants had gone, some to Germany, others now rested in what Picard calls le dernier costume. No. 6 still complained unceasingly from his corner bed. No. 3, the Chasseur Alpin with a bullet through the chest, had recovered from various complications and was now able to sit up in a chair. Among the newcomers were three English soldiers. Ben Steele, a reservist from Manchester, had one bullet through his arm and one through his leg. Both wounds were healed, but the leg remained stiff, swollen, paralysed, and the pain was ceaseless.

The story of his wound is one of those ugly tales of atrocities committed by individual German soldiers, for which the German Army, with its perfect discipline, cannot escape responsibility. Ben was badly wounded in the arm, and was left lying in the trenches when his company retired. "I got

FOUNDLINGS FROM LA BASSÉE

Photo taken at Cambrai

that in fair fighting," said Ben, pointing to his wounded arm. He told me the rest of the story briefly, and did not care to refer to it again. "When the Germans came along they shouted 'Hands up.' I was lying in the bottom of the trench. I lifted my left hand, but a German soldier, jumping over the trench, fired down at me point-blank, and the bullet, which went through my right thigh, knocked me unconscious." Ben was sent back to England a few months later, and will probably be crippled for life.

On December 5th a party of convalescent British soldiers arrived from the Civil Hospital, among them R. Anderson, a reservist from my own battalion, L.-Cpl. M'Donald, Royal Irish, and James Prime, Rifle Brigade.

I can never forget the four days these men spent with me at the 106—first, because they were such good companions, and second, because two of these men subsequently met death at German hands under circumstances of revolting inhumanity.

Prime represented all that is best in the typical English soldier. He came from the Midlands, the heart of England. It was a treat for me to sit and listen to the story of his short battle experience, which, a plan and common tale in these times, acquired enthralling interest from the graphic language and quiet humour of the speaker.

Irish, Scotch, and English, we all gathered in

the Salle cinq and forgot our troubles, present and impending.

Prime was a born story-teller. He possessed the rare faculty of making pictures in the minds of his hearers. He showed me a photograph of his wife and children, and I can well remember the description of his home in England. We found a subject of mutual interest in the keeping of poultry on the "intensive" system, and discussed the respective merits of Wyandottes, Leghorns, and Buff Orpingtons.

"Bob" Anderson, when I first saw him, was sitting dressed in blue coat and red kepi at the refectory table with Prime, M'Donald the Irish Lance-Corporal, and half a dozen French soldiers. Right glad I was to hear the familiar accents of my native land!

Anderson could give me no news of the battalion, as he had been knocked out at the same time and place as myself. On the whole, the Germans had so far treated him fairly well. "It was surely the whole German army," said Bob, "that marched along the road near Audencourt when I was lying in the ditch with a broken leg, smoking my pipe. They didn't take much notice. At one of the halts a German stepped out of the ranks—'Hullo, Jock, what's ado wi' you?' said he, and gave me a drink out of his water-bottle. This was a German who had lived for fifteen years in Glasgow! The next

halt was a different story. Several of the Germans gathered round, shook their fists at me, and one of them snatched the pipe out of my mouth and threw it away."

M'Donald, who soon after died a hero's death at Wittenberg, was a young fellow not more than twenty-one or twenty-two, quiet, sad, and delicate-looking. He had quite recovered from a dangerous wound in the chest, though he was still weak and walked with difficulty.

A photographer came and took a group of the British soldiers, who were mostly dressed in French uniform, and next day they were all taken off to Germany. Their departure for Germany was such a day of sadness for us who were left behind, that it seems as if we must have had some premonition of the future. The men went off loaded with as many parcels as they could carry—shirts, socks, tobacco, food, a bottle of wine in each greatcoat pocket, and five francs each from the Hospital funds.

Of the three soldiers, Anderson is the only one who has lived to tell the story of what befell after leaving the courtyard of the 106 on Dec. 7, 1914. Anderson survived, was eventually exchanged, and we met a year later in Millbank Hospital. The following is the story in his own words, taken down in shorthand. It is a story which bears the stamp of truth in every word, and is corroborated in every

detail by a Government report published in all the daily papers on April 10, 1916:—

"When we left Cambrai Station, we were sent in a hospital train to Giessen; it took us three days. We had one basin of soup each day, and a piece of bread.

"When we got to Giessen we were taken to a waiting-room at the station and bad used. All the English were put on one side, called 'English swine' and that kind of thing. We were then taken in a motor ambulance to the Town Hall in Giessen. We were three weeks in that hospital and the food was all right there, but we, especially the English, were bad used all the time by the orderlies. There were four English altogether—M'Donald, Prime, and myself, and another chap in the Wilts. We went from there to Giessen camp, a great big French camp, and had to march two and a half miles with two sticks; I was nearly dead when I reached that camp; it was all uphill, and a crowd behind us shoving us on. We were there three days, then had orders to fall in and march to the station again. We started to march to the station, but I was not fit to do it, and some one stopped me in the town, put me on a car, and took me to the station in the car. We got to Wittenberg the next day, and as soon as we arrived in Wittenberg all the people were at the station, a big crowd, men and women. They all had big sticks, some had bars of iron, and we had

to run the gauntlet of this,—of course I could not do so. I got one terrible kick, but anyhow I managed to get into camp, and as soon as we got into camp we got knocked about by the Germans, and everything was taken from us.

"Of course the food was horrible all the time. We had heard stories about typhus in the camp, and the French doctors inoculated us. I took ill about the beginning of February, and the Frenchman took my temperature, which was very high. He ordered me to the hospital, but there were no stretchers to be got. Six men carried me down to the bottom of the camp, about half a mile, and dragged me into an empty bungalow. It was in the same camp; there was no isolation. I was put on the floor amongst a lot of Russians; there were very few beds, and I was on the bare floor. In the camp there was one bed between three men, and I had left my bed in the camp. I lay on the bare floor all the afternoon; no orderlies were there; nobody came near me. The soup came up at night—just the same ordinary rations as we got in camp. The soup came up in a wooden tub without a cover, and they had to carry it about half a mile from the cook-house, and it arrived at the hospital full of dust and dirt—at the door of the hospital. The strongest that were able to get it got it, and the weakest lay without. That is a fact. I lay there

about three or four days, when some Englishmen volunteered to come down and look after us.

"I took typhus first: when I was in hospital four or five days, Prime was carried there; he was put down on the floor, and died four or five days afterwards. Sergeant Spence of the Scots Guards was with him when he died. Just before the end they got him a ramshackle bed made up with boards, no mattress.

"The place was a long, narrow hut, whitewashed all over, and about one hundred men in it, absolutely packed, and not more than half a dozen beds at the first. We lay on the floor. There were stoves, but hardly any coal. No one brought in any food. You had to go outside to get it, and the orderly would give you some soup in your basin if you were there. Those not fit to rise from the floor got none unless a comrade brought it to them.

"The French doctors came round, but what could they do? They had nothing to give you, and could do absolutely nothing.

"The Germans had all left the camp as soon as typhus broke out. They built up wooden shoots to put the food down. When parcels from home came they went down the shoot.

"When the beds came in carts they were lifted over the barbed wire. No Germans came in.

"There were never enough beds, and men were lying on the floor all the time.

Pte. R. Anderson
L.-Cpl. M'Donald Mme. Buquet Pte. James Prime

BRITISH SOLDIERS AT THE "106"

"We had nearly 100 deaths a day at one time. The total population of the camp was about 16-17,-000, with only about six doctors, French and Russian. Then we had six British R.A.M.C. doctors—Captain Sutcliffe, Major Fry, Captain Fielding, Captain Vidal, and Mr. Lugard. Major Fry, Captain Fielding, and Captain Sutcliffe took the typhus and died. I never got a wash all the time I was there until I was able to go to the tap. There was one fellow, a private in the Gordons, who never had his wound dressed; it was running all the time. He died of pure neglect and typhus. A man died next me with his clothes on, never had them off, even his greatcoat on. Our clothes were running with vermin—millions!

"You could not get dressings or bandages. I have seen men with open wounds who have had to wash their bandages, and hang them up to dry before they could put them on again.

"M'Donald volunteered as an orderly in the Typhus Ward, and when he came along he was only one day on duty when he took typhus. He got better, but declined because of the starvation diet. I had him out walking for a little bit up and down, but he was very weak, a living skeleton. He would fall down, and I told him to try and get up and walk a little bit. 'Oh, Jock,' he says, 'I'm no' fit.' 'Come on,' I said, 'try.' He got a parcel from home

—one from his mother—just before he died. It was just from hunger and neglect.

"Things were getting that bad about the month of April that the Germans began to get a little afraid, and started a new hospital—about half a dozen of huts. It was isolated from the camp, and we moved there about the beginning of May.

"Things gradually got a little better after that, but January, February, and March were three awful months.

"The Germans did not come back into the camp till the month of August.

"After I was better of the typhus I was back in the same camp. All food was thrown over the barbed wire. Even packets were sent down the shoot. The Germans never came near; you would see them outside the wire. Just before the American Ambassador came there was a new thing for carrying down the food—something like a dustbin with a lid on. The shoot is still there, but is not used. After the Ambassador came we put in a claim, saying we had been passed as unfit for military service, and men who ought to have gone home last August had had it cancelled at the last moment; but we heard no more. The American Ambassador said that must be the Government's fault; he would see about it. He sent us a lot of games. We were only allowed to play games between the huts.

"The camp was run by the Russians, and nobody to look after us. The Germans never came in; you could do what you liked as long as you did not go too near the wire, when they used to sound the alarm. When the alarm sounded at night we had to run into the park, and if you did not get into the park soon enough they fired at you. They fired one night and killed six Frenchmen. One of the Royal Irish who came up with me had a bullet right past his ear,—I suppose it made him pretty nippy.

"We got no clean clothing or a change. The English were all in rags: you would not know they were soldiers at all to look at them. Just three days before the American Ambassador came, when they heard he was coming, they paraded us all up and looked at our underclothing. We got a shirt and a pair of socks to smarten us up. You could never get hot water; but the day that the American Ambassador came the Germans came round in the morning and told us that if any of us wanted hot water, to send two men out of each room to the cook-house and get as much boiling water as we wanted. We wondered what was up: we were saying there was something up that day. The Ambassador asked us what clothing we had. He made a great improvement: we got shirts and overcoats, but they took all our overcoats away.

"He asked a lot of men if they had had typhus; he seemed to know all about it. Just previous to

that, a Mr. Jackson from the American Embassy came. It is wonderful how things got about the camp. This was shortly after the typhus was cleared out, but he did not come into the camp. There were about thirty yards of space between the wires, and he could not speak to any of us; he just went round. There was a crowd of Germans; but when Mr. Gerard came himself he came into the barrack-room and asked one man a question, then another.

"There was a German who could speak English, but he never came near them. Mr. Gerard seemed to go about the thing very business-like: he was not afraid. He was very keen on getting hold of any man who had been out working and had come in again to camp. Some had not been paid. They were only paid 30 pfennigs (3d.) a day for a hard day's work. The camp was working at a big factory, and you had to get up at 4 in the morning, and they drove you into a big square like a sheep-pen and put all the English together. We called it the Slave Market. They drove you into this pen, and the gangers would come in the morning and take you out. 'I will have you,' and 'You come along with me,'—just like a slave market. We had to get up at 4 and went out at 5. You were put in the slave market at 5.30, and worked from then till 6 at night—and very hard work too. We were working on building a big factory where they were

making hand-grenades—very intricate machinery. Nobody seemed quite to know what they were manufacturing there. The men were carrying the stone for the building. One German who could speak English told one of my chums that the factory was for making hand-grenades.

"They gave out an order that there was to be no smoking in the barrack-room, as the French had refused to allow German prisoners in France to smoke, so they would stop it there. If they caught a man smoking, and they had a stick, he got it. There were no orders printed to tell us what we had or had not to do. They never deliberately tied an Englishman to a post, but I have seen them doing it to Russians, tying them up to the post. If you did anything that did not please them, you were put in the coal-hole, we used to call it, the place where they get the coal-briquettes from, and kept without food for three days—only bread and water, solitary confinement. Many an Englishman got that. We used to carry down some of our dinner and slip it into them.

"The day the American Ambassador came, Captain Vidal looked well after it, and anything that was done he reported it at once. I think he had been saying something to the American Ambassador, and one of the Germans had overheard it. When the Ambassador went away, he struck Captain Vidal with his sword. We heard that was

the reason why Captain Vidal did not come with us, as there was an inquiry about it at the time. Then Major Priestly was in solitary confinement for a while—I don't know what he had done; we heard that he was found with a revolver, but we could not say. He was isolated away from the officers altogether for close on two months—never saw him. He is back again in camp now. We read in the 'Continental Times' that he was going home on the 3rd September—or August—but some proceedings were being taken against him. It said in the 'Continental Times' misbehaviour,—I suppose in looking well after the wounded—or something like that.

"One day we had to pass the German doctor and then went back to barracks. Heard no more until six days afterwards, and the 1st December a German came up about 8 A.M. and formed us up in the barrack-room. Some of those going home had a new shirt given them. A Russian was stopped and told to take off his clogs and give them to that Englishman. Then we went to Aachen. A complaint had been sent to Wittenberg about us; they were kicking up a terrible row for sending us away like that. The officer commanding the camp asked us where we came from. When we said Wittenberg, he said he thought so. We looked such awful sights —filthy; and we were supposed to be dressed coming away. We were very well treated at Aachen—they always do so. Every one was nicer than

another, to try and create a good impression. We knew what it was.

"I was sorry for two chaps. One of the London Scottish had been there fourteen months, and had a bad wound in his leg, and could not move his leg. He was sent back because he was a non-commissioned officer. Another man, a sergeant, with his leg off, could speak Hindustani, and I think that was the reason he was sent back, but I am not sure. His leg was off to the thigh. He was with the Lugard party. A lance-corporal, with his arm off, was also sent back, after thinking he was going to be exchanged. None of the non-commissioned officers got away from that place."

There is a corner of the hospital courtyard where in December the rays of the sun will fall for the space of an hour, illuminating first the big high wall which shuts off light and air from the northwest, then throwing upon the ground itself a triangle of light which gradually broadens, loses shape, and fills at last the narrow passage between the courtyard and the dead garden, but stops short of the broken wooden paling, throwing no cleansing ray on the dismal rubbish-heaps, leaving undisturbed the sepulchral clamminess of the shadows beyond.

In days of peace this corner was surely favoured by the school children. From the high wall to the gable of the main building stretches a single heavy

beam, which had perhaps once been painted green, but was now green with the mould of decay. A few rusty rings and hooks, from one of which a piece of sodden rope still hung, showed to what purpose the beam had served.

The rain, which had been falling steadily, as it seemed, day and night during November, was checked by the first threat of frost, and during the fortnight before Christmas we had bright and cheerful weather. A few convalescent patients were tempted to take a seat in the sun, and came to notice the hour, early in the afternoon, when the triangle of light first strikes the high wall.

We had a bench placed against the wall (it was a very tiny one, and belonged to one of the junior classrooms). Picard, myself, and two French soldiers from Salle un were at first the only *habitués;* none of the British soldiers remaining at the 106 were able to leave their beds, and most of the other Frenchmen were either too weak or too frightened of fresh air to come out and sit in the yard.

It is a common failing of human nature to feel comforted at the sight of other people's misfortune. So it was that the sight of a French soldier who had been shot in the head aroused in me not only the interest of pity, but also, I must confess, a sense of superiority at finding some one worse off than myself. Jean was the name we called him by. No

one knew his real name or his regiment, or the place where he was born, or any details of how he had been wounded. His wound in the head was on the left side, almost exactly in the same place as my own—the bullet had made the same furrow, all the symptoms were identical, the right leg dragging, the right arm hanging, the slow elephantine movement; but there was a difference, said Dr. Debu, between the two points of impact. In the case of Jean the impact of the bullet was a hair's-breadth more to the front of the head, only the difference of perhaps a tenth of a millimetre. And so it was that poor Jean had lost not only the power of motion on the right side, but also speech, memory, and understanding.

All these faculties might return in time (doctors are optimists *par métier*), but at present understanding was limited to questions of the most primitive order—cold and heat, hunger and thirst; speech to a moan which signified no; memory to events of the past forty-eight hours, so that Jean knew nothing of the war, of his regiment, of his home; his face with his dropped jaw and vacant look was already the face of an idiot.

One morning in the refectory Jean fell off his chair on to the floor, grew purple in the face and foamed at the mouth. Urgent messengers flew off to fetch Dr. Debu, and we all thought it was the end of Jean, until my nurse of the Salle cinq suggested

epileptic fits, an opinion which was subsequently ratified by the doctor's verdict, "epilepsie Jacksonienne." Jean did not appear again in the yard until nearly a fortnight after this incident, and his place on the bench in the sun was taken by another whose name, according to his own statement, was "Mahamed, son of Mahamed."

Mahamed was still limping badly from a shot wound in the calf. He did not look more than nineteen, and came from near Oran. His knowledge of French was confined to "Merci le Madam," with a shining smile, and "Alleman grand cochon."

Mahamed, having discovered my knowledge of a few words of his native tongue and my acquaintance with his native country, followed me about like a shadow. For many months his feelings had perforce been suppressed, and now presuming too greatly on my supposed fluency in Arabic conversation, the poor fellow sat on the little bench in the sun pouring out his story.

We had the story nearly every day, and I began to put bits of it together. Of one thing he was quite certain, namely, that the "Alleman" was a pig and son of a pig, and that his other ancestors were of most infamous repute. In the mixed lingo of the bench, the same declaration was made every day at the close of the sitting, when the sun went behind the high wall: "Alleman no bon, kif kif

cochon Yhoudi ben Yhoudi, Sheitan ben Sheitan, Halouf ben Halouf."

"Ça c'est tout de même vrai," said Picard the one-legged, patting his stump thoughtfully and pulling volcanoes of smoke from his clay pipe. "Alleman kif kif cochon." "Le Boche voyez vous," said Picard, addressing the bench party, which was slowly moving back to hospital, "le Boche ça a des petits yeux de cochon, c'est blanc et rose, comme le cochon, ça mange. . . . Ah, les Boches Halouf ben Halouf," and Picard hurriedly finished his discourse out of respect for M. le Vicaire-General, who had just joined the group.

"Bonjour, M. le Vicaire, you're just in time," I said. "Nous disions du mal de notre prochain." "Il n'y a pas de mal à ça, Monsieur le Curé," interrupted Picard, "puisque nous ne parlions que des Boches." "Voyons, M. le Curé," this aggressively, "the Gospel tells us to love our enemies. Do you love the Boches?" This question, and the spirit in which it was asked, was significant of the new atmosphere which had begun to permeate the Salle cinq after the arrival of the French soldier who had declared himself an enemy of fresh air. Gradually this man's evil influence pervaded the whole ward, just as the evil thing he stood for had permeated all France before the war.

M. le Vicaire-General came to the Salle cinq nearly every day, visiting each man's bedside, and

no man, except one, however unspiritual his past, could resist the charm of the old priest, in whose smile shone an unselfish soul.

The "enemy of fresh air" was known to the British soldiers in the ward as "Judas Iscariot." When the priest came near his bed, Judas shook his head slightly and smiled an almost imperceptible smile, with all the air of saying, "La religion c'est pour les enfants, les femmes et les imbéciles."

It was some sneer from Judas that prompted Picard's question.

"Voyons, M. le Curé, aimez vouz les Boches?"

The old priest looked at Picard's honest troubled face and answered slowly—

"Mais puisque l'évangile nous ordonne de nous aimer les uns les autres et surtout d'aimer nos ennemis, il faut toujours faire son possible pour suivre ce divin conseil et je peux dire que j'aime les Boches—mais—chez eux—pas chez nous."

In Germany, just as in England, Christmas is kept with great feasting and rejoicing, and during the week preceding Christmas M. Vampouille was hard at work making sausages for his German customers, who were to hold a festive meeting at the Kommandantur. Great preparations were also being made at the 106, and the staff of the hospital, forgetting for the time being their private squabbles, joined with our friends in the town in preparing a Merry Christmas.

Christmas morning. Mass at 10 o'clock in Salle un. M. le Vicaire-General preaches a tactful sermon on "resignation." After Mass candles on the Christmas tree are lit and presents distributed.

The altar was erected at the extreme end of Salle un, and very artistically decorated with palms, laurel branches, and holly; behind the altar were two large flags (home-made) of England and France; on the right was a large Christmas tree.

All patients who were fit to be moved, except Judas Iscariot, were carried up from the Salle cinq and grouped near the altar. In the bed nearest the altar a British reservist lay with a shattered spine, still alive, still conscious, still able to speak, the lower half of his body lifeless since the 26th of August 1914. This was his last week on earth. "Here's a funny kind of Christmas," he whispered; "next Christmas we'll be at home, shan't we?"

On my right, close to the altar steps, sat Picard, beyond him Mahamed ben Mahamed looking puzzled and depressed, and at the end of the row a lady on crutches, dressed in deep mourning, who had lost a leg during the aeroplane fight in September. The other wounded were seated in beds, packed in double row, half-way down each side of the ward, the remainder of which was filled with friends from the town.

Madame Tondeur was busy in the kitchen with three turkeys to roast and carve into very small

pieces, so that every one might get a taste. The plum pudding being very small, was reserved for the Salle cinq. Printed directions on the tin suggested that the pudding could be eaten cold or boiled for "half an hour." Perhaps this was a misprint for "half a day." After the half-hour's boiling, the pudding still seemed to have a compressed appearance, and looked very diminutive under its large stick of holly. Madame Tondeur herself carried the flaming pudding into the Salle cinq, divided it up into twelve portions, the indigestible but fortunately small fragments were duly eaten, and the ancient tradition of Christmas remained for us unbroken.

Between Christmas and the New Year it was decided that my name was to go down on the list of "transportables," and that I would have to join the next party for Germany. Thinking over the last few days spent at the 106 Hospital, I remember first of all the parting words of my nurse: "In days to come try and remember the bright side of your stay here and forget the days of darkness." And here I may say in plain words what I feel most deeply, although these words cannot be read for many months, perhaps years, by those to whom I would wish to address them.

Many a limbless British soldier owes his life to the surgeon of the Civil Hospital. The question in those days was not merely "Will an operation save

A WARD AT THE "106"

life?" but rather, "Is there time to operate on those whose lives might be saved?" Dr. Debu proved himself to be the man for such an emergency. United to great skill, he possessed great physical strength and powers of resistance to fatigue. For three days and three nights he operated almost without taking time for meals or sleep.

For the devoted kindness of the French doctors and nurses, both of the Hôpital Civil, the 106, and the other ten or twelve hospitals of Cambrai, who for many months under conditions of great difficulty and danger, without many of the most necessary medical appliances, worked night and day to save the lives of British soldiers and to ease the last moments of the mortally wounded, I feel that this very inadequate expression of gratitude must be set down.

There are many other kind friends at Cambrai whose kindness I can never forget.

Consider my situation at Cambrai: unknown, cut off from all intercourse with the world, about to start off for a German prison, and without a sixpence. I did not like to ask a loan from my kind friends, who had already given me a complete outfit of underclothing and toilet necessaries. On New Year's Day the subject of money was broached by M. Ray in a straightforward business-like manner. "You are shortly going to Germany," he said; "even in prison money is useful; you will need some

money; we have brought you some." The sum M. Ray proposed to give me was £50! We decided that half this sum would be ample, and I gave M. Ray a receipt "payable après la guerre."

After these true friends in need had left, M. Vampouille came in to sit with me, and he made the same suggestion about money, and insisted on my accepting a further sum, the loan of which, he said, is granted on one condition only: "You must not pay me by cheque, you must come yourself—after the war!"

Next morning a decrepit omnibus driven by a German soldier came to take me from the Hôpital 106 to M. Brunot's Hôpital Annexe, from where, after three days, I was sent off to Germany.

CHAPTER VI

CAMBRAI TO WÜRZBURG

I

I HAD been four months in hospital when my name was put down on the list of "transportables," and a place was reserved for me in the "Zug Lazaret."

These trains were made up according to the output from the different hospitals along the front, chiefly from Lille, Douai, Cambrai, and St. Quentin.

After the pressure of traffic consequent on the rush back from the Marne had subsided, a regular hospital-train service was inaugurated, and trains direct to Munich were run once a week.

When I expressed some fears to Dr. Schmidt as to how I would be treated on my journey, he laughed, saying something about German culture, and that one must not believe all the tales one hears about the Germans. At any rate, he assured me I had nothing to fear, for instructions had been given to pay every attention that the nature of my wound required, and I was to travel by a special Lazaret

with a comfortable bed and plenty of good food from a restaurant car.

In the light of subsequent experiences I am sometimes rather suspicious of my friend's kindly intentions. The German idea of humour is so different from any other. I often wonder if Dr. Schmidt had been "pulling my leg" in his clumsy German way.

However, when the motor ambulance came to fetch me at 10 A.M. on the 6th of January, I started off on my journey quite free in my mind from painful anticipations. I pictured to myself a comfortable hospital train, with perhaps a German Schwester to look after the worst cases, and if not a made-up bed, at least a stretcher on which I could rest my paralysed limbs.

On arriving at Cambrai station I found that the "special hospital train" consisted of ordinary 3rd-class corridor coaches, which were packed with French and English wounded. I was helped along the train by two kindly German soldiers, and lifted up into a 2nd-class carriage, where I was warmly greeted by a French Army doctor, like myself *en route* for a German prison.

One side of the carriage had been made up as a bed, and the nice white sheets looked most inviting. However, my satisfaction with what I supposed to be the arrangements for my comfort was short-lived. I had scarcely time for more than a few

M. LE VICAIRE-GÉNÉRAL

words with the French doctor when a German officer, a lieutenant, appeared at the door. His message was brief and easy to understand. I was to get out.

In spite of my protests, this officer attempted to make me climb down on to the platform, but as this was quite beyond my powers, he allowed me to crawl along the corridor. At the far end of the train was a 3rd-class corridor coach of the usual Continental type, with hard wooden seats, the partitions running only half-way to the roof. This coach was full of wounded French and English soldiers, among whom I recognised several who had been in hospital with me, but I was not allowed to speak to them. At the end of the coach was a compartment, one side of which had been transformed into a bed by nailing up a board against the seat, which was covered with straw.

I was assisted on to my bed of straw by a German N.C.O., who, along with three other soldiers, all with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets, took up all the remaining room in the carriage. It was evident that I was to be efficiently guarded.

I took no notice of my escort, but kept an eye on the platform, as I wished to get a hold of some German officer of high rank, in order to protest against my removal from the 2nd-class carriage. Presently an inspecting officer, a captain, I think, came along the train.

I explained to this officer that the wound in my head was only newly healed, that I was still quite paralysed on one side, and that Dr. Schmidt had arranged (as I thought) for my proper accommodation on the journey.

I requested permission to be allowed to travel along with the French officer from whose company I had been somewhat rudely shifted.

The German officer, standing on the platform, listened to what I had to say, and when I had finished he got on to the footboard, looked through my carriage window at the wooden bed, the straw, and the three sentries, and then I got my answer: "Das ist schön für einen Engländer."

This was my first lesson in German Kultur. I thanked the contemptuous German most heartily, and I fancy that my exaggerated politeness somewhat annoyed him.

Although I did not appear to be taking any notice of my sentries, I could not avoid catching the eye of the man opposite, who kept on glaring at me with a most objectionable persistency.

I looked at him in my most benevolent manner, but made no attempt at conversation.

When presently the others got up and went out into the corridor, this man's conduct became most alarming. He was evidently under stress of some strong emotion. Suddenly his whole manner changed. Laying a finger on his lips with a warn-

ing gesture, he bent towards me and said in a low tense voice, "Moi aussi je hais les Allemands."

In spite of the hatred in his voice and the bitter look which accompanied the words, I did not show much eagerness to follow up this somewhat startling opening for conversation. I was rather afraid of some trap. One had heard stories of prisoners on the way to Germany being taken out of the train and shot on the accusation of having spoken of the Fatherland in an unbecoming manner or on some similar trumped-up charge. All attempt at further conversation was, however, put a stop to by the return of the other sentries.

The soldier opposite, whether friend or foe I knew not, remained silent and motionless in his corner, although from time to time he favoured me with a malevolent stare, while his companions took hardly any notice of me at all. It was some time before another opportunity occurred for private conversation. However, at some country station the three soldiers got out to get a drink of coffee, leaving me alone with the mysterious sentry. Again his manner changed, and again bending forward, he hissed with a hatred in his voice that seemed very genuine, "Moi aussi je hais les Allemands."

And then in atrociously bad French my "friendly" enemy threw light on his mysterious behaviour by explaining that he was a Pole, and was under orders to join at Valenciennes some reinforcements

that were being hurried up to Arras. "I have to go on," he said; "I cannot help myself, but I will never aim straight at the French or English."

I suggested that he might perhaps manage to get taken prisoner, but he answered that it would be most difficult, as all Poles were kept separate from their fellow-countrymen and closely watched.

Any shirking in the firing line would mean instant death at the hand of some Bavarian comrade.

He begged me not to betray by any word or sign that we had conversed together, because he was looked upon with suspicion by the other soldiers, and for that reason had feigned intense hatred of the English. This was the explanation of the malevolent stare at me. At this point the other sentries returned, and no further opportunity for conversation occurred.

My newly-found friend was evidently worrying over his miserable lot. He took out a well-thumbed Feldpostkarte, and as he read one could see that his thoughts were far away with the wife and children from whose side he had been dragged to fight for the hereditary enemies of his country. I shall not easily forget the sadness of the man's face,—a young face with very dark, dog-like eyes. There was nothing smart about him; he was indeed rather more dirty than even a travel-stained soldier from Poland had any right to be. As I looked at him I thought of the countless numbers of German

soldiers whose lives had been sacrificed in vain efforts to capture the French position at Arras. And this man was to be one more. His fate was perhaps the hardest of all. For him there would not even be the soldier's last consolation of duty done. As the train drew up at Valenciennes the soldiers in my carriage began to put on their equipment, and when the train had stopped they all got out. My Polish friend went out last, and as he left the carriage he turned round and bade me with his eyes a silent and almost appealing farewell.

Valenciennes is an important junction, forming a central point from which the railway line branches off to both the French and the English front. Moreover, the principal base hospital had been transferred here from Cambrai early in October, so I was not surprised to find the platform crowded with Red Cross attendants, stretcher-bearers, doctors, railway transport officers, and soldiers representing all parts of the German Empire. Now that my Polish friend and his two comrades had gone I was left alone with the fat *unterofficier,* who took the first opportunity that was offered of exercising his authority over me.

It was a very mild evening for January, and as I soon got tired of watching the crowd of German soldiery, whose presence in France is an outrage that cannot be fully realised by merely reading about it in the papers, I leant out of the window

on the opposite side of the train. The contrast was striking. Not a soldier was in sight, and the little French town, as far as one could see from my carriage window, seemed abnormally quiet. To make complete the illusions of peace, a grey-headed French railway employee in his blue blouse came sauntering down the line.

When he reached my carriage and saw the British uniform, he cordially wished me good-evening, and asked where I had been wounded. I did not get further in the conversation than to return the "bon-soir" when my sentry rushed across the carriage, threw up the window, and in a voice meant to be most terrifying thundered out that "to speak out of the window was 'verboten.' "

I said I was sorry, but did not know it to be "verboten." This inoffensive remark produced a regular parade scolding, accompanied by an interesting exhibition of eye-rolling, which forms an important part of German military discipline.

The lecture ended up with a dramatic pointing of the finger to an enormous high-up stomach and "Ich verbiete." I said "All right."

This seemed about to cause another storm, so I hurriedly translated it into "Ist gut."

My guardian, still rumbling, went out into the corridor; I opened the window again, and the train moved slowly out of the station.

The train did not stop again till we were well over the Belgian frontier.

I did not see any frontier marks, nor did we stop at any frontier stations. A rough calculation, however, of the distance we had gone from Valenciennes showed that we must have reached Belgium about 6 A.M. As the train was now going very slowly, I was able to observe the countryside with more attention, and I was eagerly looking out for some landmark that might enable me to recognise the road along which we had marched on our way up to Mons nearly five months before.

Our first stop in Belgium was at a small country station, the name of which I have forgotten. This place must have been just on the fringe of the fighting during the last week of August. It was here that began the trail of the Hun.

The station was a complete wreck, and in the adjoining village only one house seemed to have escaped destruction. Temporary shelters had been rigged up with corrugated iron all along the platform, at the end of which was a wooden Red Cross dressing-station.

These dressing-stations have been set up at every station, however small, all along the line between the German frontier and the front, and form a striking example of German organisation and efficiency. They consist of two small rooms, one of which can be used as an operating-room, and is

stocked with first-aid appliances and a small pharmacy. The whole building can be taken down and set up elsewhere in a very short time.

The country now presented a melancholy sight, and as the railway line itself had been much damaged, the speed of the train was reduced to a crawl over the numerous temporary wooden railway bridges.

In Belgium the railway line was always strongly guarded, while in France I hardly noticed any troops except at the railway stations. From the moment we entered Belgium it was evident that a great number of soldiers were billeted in the villages and towns, or rather in the huts that had been constructed amidst the ruins. In fact, the German soldiers seemed in this district to have taken the place of the Belgian population, as between the frontier and Mons I do not remember seeing a single Belgian. Of course, at this time I did not know that thousands of Belgians had fled to England, nor had I heard anything more than vague rumours of German atrocities, such as the burning of Louvain and the indiscriminate murder of the civilian population in many parts of Belgium. I was therefore somewhat at a loss to understand why the railway line was so very much more carefully guarded in Belgium than it was in France, and why the civilian population seemed to have almost disappeared.

As we began to enter the mining district in which

the town of Mons is situated, I looked out of my prison window with renewed interest at the more dominant features of the landscape, which I could now recognise quite distinctly.

At one place the line followed for a short time the very road along which we had marched on the 22nd August, the day before the battle of Mons, happy in our ignorance of all that was to come.

It was along this same straight road lined with tall poplar trees that the grey-clad German soldiers had been rushed on in motor-cars, that the hundreds of machine-guns and light artillery had hurried with the hope, that was so nearly realised at Le Cateau, of destroying what was left of the little British army. Further on the line skirts the now famous Canal de Condé.

The effect of the German shell fire was very noticeable along the banks of the canal. Most of the houses within a hundred yards of the water had been totally destroyed, so that the ground between the railway line and the canal was now fairly open. On the right side of the line the damage had not been so considerable; still, even on that side fully fifty per cent of the houses were roofless. As far as a limited view from the railway would allow me to judge, I do not think the upper part of the town was much knocked about. Most of the German shelling on the 23rd had been directed on the British positions along the canal, and any damage that was

done in the town itself was probably caused by the British guns' attempt to check the German advance through the town later in the afternoon.

The lower part of the town of Mons reminded me of the streets of Pompeii. The silent ruins had been abandoned even by the German soldiers. Here and there some rough attempt had been made to provide shelter, and we passed a few miserable women and children who were standing grouped in the doorways of their shattered homes. We entered the station of Mons at about 7 P.M. Here, as far as could be seen, everything seemed quite normal, and no traces were visible of the storm that must have raged all around during that eventful August day when British troops had paid their flying visit to the town.

The platform side of the train was quite deserted, so I turned my attention to the other window, and was presently accosted by a German railway soldier. I at once surmised from his opening remark and evil-looking face that he was intent on "prisoner baiting." I naturally pretended not to understand, and he thereupon became most annoyed. The expression of his humorous thought was that "the English were all going to Berlin, and the verdammte English would verdammt well stay there for ever." I shook my head and said "nicht verstehe."

Then followed a sort of pantomime repetition of the same idea slowly spoken in simple words. Again

I shook my head. Then a brilliant idea struck him: "Parlez vous Français?" "Oui," said I. But all the French he could muster consisted of "A Berlin." This was yelled out in a loud voice with great enthusiasm.

I then constructed a sentence in very bad German to the effect that our train was not going to Berlin but to Munich. This got rid of him, as he evidently thought it was hopeless to make the thick-headed Engländer understand his subtle German humour, and off he went shouting "A Berlin, A Berlin!"

The fat N.C.O. who had been standing in the corridor during this interview now came into the carriage, and I asked him if there was any dinner going, and was told that it would be brought along presently. It was not long before a party of soldiers appeared carrying two dixies of soup, a plateful of which was handed up.

It was thin vegetable soup, tasteless and stone cold. This was the "dinner from a restaurant car" that Dr. Schmidt had told me about! My appetite would not rise to more than a spoonful of it, and I do not think even Oliver Twist would have asked for more. Fortunately my kind French friend at Cambrai had provided me with a parcel of food, and I thought the time had come to take stock of its contents. I asked my corpulent attendant to reach me down the parcel, in which I found several "petit pains," some ham, and a large lengthy German sausage, upon which, as it rolled out of the paper,

my guardian cast a swift but appreciative eye. I thought it might be a good idea to try and bribe him into a good temper, and ventured to ask for the loan of a knife! My request having been complied with, I sheared off a large piece of the sausage and stuck it on the end of the knife as I handed it back to its owner.

A grateful grunt showed that my offering to the stomach had found a weak spot in the enemy's armour, and from that moment we were comparatively friendly. After I had eaten some bread and ham I asked for something to drink, and was told that nothing was to be had except the thin cold soup. I had saved one or two cheap cigars from the hospital, and I settled down as best I could to smoke one of them.

I have forgotten to mention that there was a Red Cross attendant on the train, whose occupation consisted in slouching in the corridor and staring out of the window. He was a short, thick-set man, one of the dirtiest-looking I have ever seen in uniform. He wore a once white linen overall and a Red Cross badge on his arm. I do not know if he was qualified for Red Cross work, as he made no attempt or offer to help me or any of the other wounded men. Shortly after leaving Mons I began to feel symptoms of a bad headache coming on, and so I asked my guardian if there was a doctor on the train and if he could give me some aspirin. My

request was passed on to the Red Cross attendant, who said he would go and ask the doctor.

It was now dark, and the train stopped at many small stations, at each of which numbers of soldiers were billeted. Some of them always came up to my carriage to show off their knowledge of English. One or two of them were very rude, but the majority were merely interested and addressed me quite politely, sometimes in fluent English. One man I remember, who spoke just like an Englishman, said that he had been twelve years in England with a German band and knew all the coast towns. This fellow said he was very sorry "that England had made this War," as no Germans would like to go back there any more.

At several stations other German bandsmen spoke to me out of the darkness, and sometimes they climbed up on to the footboard and attempted to enter into discussions as to who started the War. England, of course, was declared to be the aggressor and originator of all the trouble, and some surprise mingled with hatred was expressed at her action in thus attacking, for no apparent reason, a pacific industrial country like Germany. Of course I was not in a position to argue the point, and generally contented myself with asking whether they thought we had prepared an Expeditionary Force of 70,000 men to attack 7,000,000 Germans.

These men belonged for the most part to the

Landsturm, and one of them told me they had been in billets for over two months. They seemed quite cheerful at the prospect of going nearer the firing line.

Conscription is, from the Germans' point of view, simply organised patriotism, although ignorant opponents of National Service are fond of sneering at the German conscript and assert that he will only fight when forced on with revolvers. I wish that some of our stay-at-home sneerers could have seen these crowds of German conscripts and heard the singing and laughter. If cheerfulness be one of the first qualities of a soldier, these people possessed it to a very high degree.

At one station a soldier who was, I think, rather full of beer, hung on to the footboard outside my window and attempted to be offensive in a mixture of German and English. His peroration was coming to an end as the train began to move, but he clung on and delivered his final shaft: "England is the enemy and will be punished." However, his own punishment was near at hand, for when he attempted to jump off the train, which was running fairly fast, he made a false step and fell heavily on the back of his head, and, as it seemed to me, right under the wheels of the train.

My sentry, who under the influence of sausage had become quite communicative, remarked that the man was drunk and deserved all he got.

Symptoms were now developing of a serious headache such as I had experienced once before in hospital. On asking the Red Cross attendant if he had taken my message to the doctor, I was told that it would have to wait till the next stop, and by the time we got to Charleroi I was in the fast grip of an acute neuralgic attack.

Entrance to the platform at Charleroi had evidently been *verboten*, for there was no one on the platform, although a great crowd of soldiers could be seen at the far end of the station, which was brilliantly lighted with electric arc lamps.

I again asked my sentry to get me some relief. He was quite sympathetic, and I think began to realise that I was getting rather bad. He told me that the Red Cross attendant had gone to the doctor and would be back before long. The very great pain was made worse by the knowledge that the two or three tablets of aspirin, for which I had waited so long, would afford instant relief. At last the Red Cross attendant came along the corridor and made some sign to the sentry, who went out to speak to him. They talked for a long time, and seemed to be arguing about something. Every minute was more painful than the last, and then, to my relief, the sentry came back. I stretched out my hand for the aspirin. "Nichts," he said, "the doctor sends a message—'tell the Englishman not to smoke cigars and he will not have a headache.'"

Looking back now on this incident I am inclined to acquit the German doctor of all blame, although at the time I was full of wrath at what I supposed to be callous indifference and cruelty, surprising even in a German member of the medical profession. The most likely explanation is that the dirty Red Cross attendant had never taken my message to the doctor at all.

The only thing now was to get some sleep while the train was at rest, as I knew that when the jolting began again sleep would be quite impossible.

My desire for rest was not, however, to be satisfied, for the sentry leant out of the window on my side of the carriage and started a conversation with somebody on the platform. I was surprised to hear that he was talking to a woman, and on looking up to see who it was, a pleasant voice bade me "Good-evening" in perfect English.

A pretty, young Red Cross nurse stood there at the window. The sight of her, the kindness with which she spoke, the sympathetic look, were for a moment as unreal to me as the memory of a dream. "Is there anything I can do for you?" she said; "I hope you are not very badly wounded." As soon as she knew of my headache she went running along the train, and was back almost at once with three large tablets of aspirin. "I am so glad to be able to help you," she said; "I promised my friends in

England that I would do all in my power to help the poor English wounded."

I could not find words to thank her then, and I cannot find them now. Never did I need kindness more, and never was a kind deed more kindly done.

Before the train started off again the good sister came back to ask how I was feeling, and wished me well on my journey.

The relief to the pain was almost immediate, and in spite of the renewed joltings, and the hard bed which afforded small comfort to a semi-paralysed man, I slept soundly for the rest of the night.

II

The day had not long dawned when I awoke so cramped and stiff that I could hardly move, but still refreshed by much-needed sleep, and above all free of the previous night's headache. My sentry, who had also slept well, was good enough to ask how I felt, and said we were going to Aachen, but he could not or would not say if this was to be our ultimate destination.

We reached Aachen about 8.30, and a more miserable morning could not be imagined. It had evidently rained hard all night, and the downpour showed no signs of abating.

Looking out at the pretty little town half hidden

in the mist that hung over the wooded hills, I was wondering if this was to be our journey's end, when I saw what looked like two British officers walking along the station road. There was no mistake about the British warm coats! Of course they were Germans, who doubtless found the British uniform more suited than their own to the steadily drenching rain.

Our journey was not, however, to finish here, for soon the sentry, who had been standing in the corridor, came back and said that we had to change and get into another train.

When lifted down on to the platform I was too stiff to walk even with the crutches, and had to be taken across the station on a stretcher. There were several other stretcher cases—about ten or twelve—but the majority managed to hobble along by themselves.

We were a most miserable-looking party; all the men, both British and French, were dressed in French uniforms, and one or two, whom I spoke to, said that they had had no food since leaving Cambrai.

The train into which we were now being packed was of a more antiquated type than the one we had left. A very narrow corridor ran down the centre of the coach, the narrow wooden seats on each side being made to hold four people. It was with great difficulty that I crawled along the corridor through

the crowd of wounded soldiers, mostly French, who, too miserable, too hungry and too cold for speech, were trying to huddle together as well as their wounded condition would allow.

The corridor led into a carriage with four very narrow wooden seats, which were occupied by four British soldiers and one stout sentry. This was to be my accommodation for the rest of the journey. I pointed out to my sentry, who had followed me from the other train, that it was impossible for me to travel otherwise than lying down, and that even for able-bodied passengers the carriage was overcrowded. Also I demanded anew to be allowed to travel with the French doctor, whom I now saw being escorted along the platform to the rear end of the train. My protest was of no avail, and on inquiring who was the officer in charge of the train, I was told it was the doctor who had refused the aspirin, so concluded that further expostulation would be useless. My luggage, consisting of a small canvas portmanteau and a brown paper parcel with the sausage, &c., was now brought along, and took up what small space remained in the carriage.

We were now five wounded men and two very corpulent sentries, and the problem of how to divide the available space presented some difficulty.

Two of the men, like myself, were unable to travel in a sitting position. We had four seats, one of which was more than occupied by the two sentries.

The other three had to be given to those who could not sit up, and so the remaining two men had to lie on the hard floor.

Although all these men had been very severely wounded, and were still in great pain, they had no thought for themselves, but insisted upon doing everything that they could to settle me as comfortably as possible. My bag was put at the end of a corner seat, and, making a pillow with my great-coat, I was able to get into a half sitting, half lying, and by no means comfortable position, but the best that could be done under the circumstances.

A British Tommy's cheerfulness is irrepressible. The knocking about may have been severe, the situation may be desperate, and the outlook depressing, but you will nearly always find the British soldier cheerful in spite of all.

I remember an old monastic exhortation written in the eighth century entitled, "De octo principalibus vitiis," where sadness is bracketed along with pride, covetousness, lust, and the other familiar vices, while cheerfulness is placed high on the list of virtues. I can now appreciate the old monks' valuation of cheerfulness, and for the lesson I have to thank those wounded soldiers in the railway carriage at Aachen.

They were as cheery as soldiers on furlough. For nearly four hours the train waited just outside the dripping station, and we spent most of the time

laughing! In fact, we were so hilarious that I think our sentries got suspicious; at any rate they were considerably bewildered at our strange conduct. We none of us had much to laugh at. The most helpless man in our carriage was a young fellow of nineteen in the K.O.S.B.'s, whose leg had been broken just above the shin, and a piece of the bone knocked away. This man was subsequently exchanged, and we journeyed home to England together. Two other men had bullet wounds in the thigh which were still septic; and the fourth, an Irishman from Carlow, had been very badly wounded in the face, having lost the sight of one eye, was also deaf in one ear and shockingly disfigured.

The rain still poured heavily down, and we were still, at 12.30 P.M., outside Aachen station.

At last a man who looked like a soldier of high rank, but was merely the station-master, came in, escorted by a German private, to count us. He informed our sentries that we were about to start for Mainz, and before going out the German soldier snatched the French képi from the disfigured Irishman and gave him his German round soft cap in exchange. It is a cheap and very common method of obtaining a war trophy.

It was now time to make inquiries about lunch, and we were told we would get nothing till we got to Mainz at seven o'clock.

Every one of us had been supplied by the kind French people at Cambrai with bread and cold meat, chocolate and biscuits, so that we were able to make quite a decent meal. Still I made a point of always asking the Germans for food before using our own. It was with the greatest difficulty that we at last got something to drink. Our sentries did not show any ill-feeling, and it was not their fault that nothing was given us; it was simply that no arrangements had been made. At about four in the afternoon we each got a cup of what was meant for tea, and this was the first liquid we had had since the previous morning.

The sentries were provided with coffee and sandwiches at every station, which was always brought to the carriage by women dressed in uniform. They belonged to an association which has been formed for the purpose of supplying soldiers on transport duty with hot drinks.

I inquired of one of these ladies if there was not an association for supplying prisoners of war with food and drink, and was rewarded with a solemn serious negative.

The train did not get on very fast, and we stopped a good many times just outside the stations—waits lasting sometimes over an hour. Although the amount of data regarding the internal conditions of a country which can be obtained from a carriage window on a journey such as we were making

is certainly not extensive, still I noted a good many interesting points.

Civilians, of course, were few and far between. At the stations and in the public places, and as far as I could see in the streets, nearly all were in uniform, young and old. Some of the older men wore very quaint-looking garments. I have seen more civilians on the platform of one English country station than I saw at all the German stations together between Cambrai and Würzburg.

Railway work, such as unloading coal, &c., from the trucks, was being done by boys of twelve to fifteen, working in gangs of about six, doing the work of two or three men. *All* the railway engine-drivers and employees I saw were men obviously above military age.

The stations are all under military control, and transport work is carried on by soldiers.

Troop trains passed incessantly. The men, who I should say were about twenty years old, were cheerful and always singing, just like our own troops are fond of doing, only the Germans sing much better! They shouted out greetings to the wounded Germans on our train, and looked with curiosity at the French and British soldiers. When the troop train happened to draw up opposite us, sometimes a fist would be shaken in the air, accompanied by what sounded like very bad language. But the general spirit shown by these young Ger-

man troops towards our train-load of wounded prisoners was that of contempt and pity of victors for the vanquished. The men were splendidly equipped, and many regiments carried a long spade strapped on to the back of their kit, the iron head stretching high above the helmet. I remember starting to count the troop trains, but I cannot find any note of the number in my diary. I should put the number we saw in one day at from fifteen to twenty.

In the public squares of the smaller towns, and even outside some of the country villages, groups of youths, almost children, were being put through elementary military exercises.

The train stopped at one small countryside station, and I got a very good view of some German troops having a field-day. They were preparing to advance on the village through some woods, and the sight reminded me of the German attacks on our trenches at Mons.

Nothing that I could observe from my carriage window spoke more eloquently of the efforts Germany was making than the goods traffic which passed along the line or lay shunted at the stations.

The very trucks themselves were eloquent of war and of Germany's success in war. Belgian rolling stock was very much in evidence, and it was depressing to see the well-known French vans with the inscription, "hommes 40, chevaux 12," familiar to all who have travelled in France. There were

also a few strange-looking waggons, either Russian or Polish.

Nearly all the goods trains were carrying war material. Long trains were standing on the sidings with Red Cross ambulances on every truck.

We passed countless numbers of trains loaded with broad wooden planks and stout larch poles, doubtless intended for the erection of earthworks. Most instructive was the sight of one long train of about thirty trucks loaded with private motor-cars of all sorts and sizes, which had been hurriedly painted with grey stripes and some sort of notice indicating Government service. Once we passed a train with heavy artillery on specially constructed waggons, and we saw several trains of ordinary field artillery. These trains of troops, munitions, motor-cars, coal, and a hundred other weapons of war that were hidden from view, the whole methodical procession of supplies to the Front, were most suggestive of power, of concentration, and organisation of effort. Most impressive was this glimpse of Germany at war. It is difficult to convey the impression to those who have not seen Germany in a state of war. Men who have been at the Front see little of the power which is behind the machine against which they are fighting.

I do not think many people in this country, even in high places, have yet understood how great, as to

be almost invincible, are the military and industrial resources of Germany.

The strength given by unity of purpose, by self-sacrifice of individual to national requirements, by organisation of disciplined masses, is the strength of Germany, behind which is the all-prevailing spirit of the motto, "Deutschland über Alles," the Fatherland above all things, and before all things. The end justifying the means in the name of a perverted patriotism, whose end is self-glorification, whose means include among other horrors the murder of an innocent and defenceless civilian population.

This German patriotism, a monstrous caricature of the noblest of virtues, is the only ideal which the brutal materialism of Prussia can still pretend to claim for its own.

Chivalry, honour, and a fair name, the ideals for which men will cheerfully die, Germany has destroyed and buried in the wreckage of Belgian homesteads.

In my carriage-window conversations with German soldiers, to whom it might have been dangerous to express myself as frankly as I have just done here, I always felt that I was dealing with people possessed by an "idée fixe." Evil, as long as it was German evil, was right.

Pride has brought these people to believe that all law, religious and ethical, should be subservient to the interests of the Fatherland. The German

pride is something quite apart from the common conceit with which all men and all nations are afflicted, for the foolish British bumptiousness, which of late years has not been so much in evidence, due to ignorance and want of intercourse with Continental nations, does not strike deep enough into the national character to affect the moral sanity of the race. But German pride working through several generations has apparently destroyed all sense of right and wrong. It has become, therefore, impossible to convince the German people of wrong-doing.

I once ventured to say, in answer to one man who was very indignant with "England's treachery" (he was a kultured man and addressed me as a "hireling of La Perfide Albion"), that at any rate we had not invaded Belgium in breach of a solemn treaty. I fully expected to be chastised for my boldness, but my remark did not arouse any indignation. I was told quite simply that "even if there was any truth in my statement the necessity of Germany was supreme and above all."

Deutschland über Alles.

At most of the stations we stopped at, men used to come into our carriage out of curiosity; some of them were rude and insulting, but very often they were eager to enter into conversation.

At one place an *Unterofficier,* who understood a little English but did not speak it, kept on repeating in German that England had made the War and

tried to catch Germany unprepared, and that we were mobilised for war in July. I did not answer him, but turned round to the wounded soldier next me and said to him, "When did you mobilise?" All the men answered in chorus, "On the 5th August." "I don't know when you Germans mobilised," I said, "but you were fighting in Belgium on the day we mobilised."

In most of their conversations the question of who was going to win was not raised, for the Germans consider that they have won already, and they have no fears of being unable to maintain the territory they have conquered.

The prevailing sentiment towards England was contemptuous. I remember some soldiers at one place reading the news to my sentry out of a German paper, and one of the items was "Kitchener has organised an army of one million men." This statement caused considerable laughter, and when the sentry returned to our carriage I asked him where the joke lay. England, he then explained, for years had employed a small number of paid men to do whatever fighting was needed, and the nation could not now be drilled and made soldiers of, as they were not animated by the martial, manly spirit of Germany, and those few that did volunteer—he used the word with contempt—would require at least a year's training.

From such conversations as these, and from

reading the German papers, I am convinced that the strongest ground of confidence the Germans possess is their contempt of England's military power. The Germans know far better than we do the weakness of our voluntary system. They know that if the full power of the British Empire was brought against them, defeat would in the long-run be inevitable. But they believe, and I think rightly believe, that this can never come to pass without organisation and discipline of the whole country. No disaster to the German arms on the field of battle would have an effect on the morale of the German people such as would result from the knowledge that the English had recognised the principle of National Service.

But as long as England remains "le pays des embusqués," German opinion will not be influenced by speeches on England's firm determination made in Parliament or leaders written in our morning papers: Germany knows that grim determination is shown not in words, but in deeds.

The day when England consents to the great sacrifice and faces the stern discipline of conscription, the present unshakable confidence of the German people will be changed into apprehensive despair.

I have interrupted the thread of my story to reply to those people who keep on telling us that we have done splendidly, that no one else could

have done what we have done; that our voluntary army of one or two or three million men, whatever it may be, is the most wonderful creation of all history; and so on to the Navy and its great deeds. The litany of praise is familiar to all, and a good deal of it is true.

But the point to be considered is not what we have done, but what we have left undone, since nothing less will suffice than the maximum possible effort.

III

I forgot to mention that either at Mons or Charleroi, I am not sure which, a sheet of paper containing all the latest war news, some printed in English and some in French, was handed to all the prisoners on the train. I have kept this interesting document, the heading of which is as follows: "A short account of facts from Official German and Foreign War Reports. 'This english [*sic*] is also published in German and Spanish.' Free of charge from the Publisher, Mrs. von Puttkamer, Hamburg, Paulstrasse 9/11."

This sheet, which purports to contain the war news for November, is evidently a monthly concoction. I append some extracts:—

Nov. 1. "Turkey declares the 'holy War.' 2000 armed Bedouins attack Egypt. As a result

of bad treatment 17 Germans die in the English Concentration Camp at Farmley."

Nov. 5. "Field-Marshal French meets with a bad accident. Conquered English cannons placed for exhibition before the Hamburg Town Hall, amidst the plaudits of the people."

Nov. 6. "As a counter measure all Englishmen in Germany between the ages of 17 and 55 interned at Ruhleben by Berlin."

Then follows a long list of German victories on all fronts, with just a passing reference to the loss of the *Emden* and the fall of Tsingtau.

Nov. 15. "Storm of indignation from all Mohammedens over the English attack against Akaba, the Holy City of Islam. Lord Roberts dies in London at age of 82."

Nov. 17. "As a result of German submarines in the channel no more English transport of troops takes place."

Nov. 18. "The Times says that it is becoming clearer every day to prominent patriots of Germany, that it is not possible to beat England. 'As I also belong to the leading men mentioned, I attach great importance to it, to prove well founded the fact that, in my opinion, England is already beaten, as an England that hides its fleet in such a war as this, and does not venture to sea, has ceased to be the England of old. It has once for all renounced its right to speak when a question of the European balance of power is dealt with.'—*Ballin.*"

Nov. 22. "Successful fight of the Turks against English and Russians at Schotel-Arab. 750 English troops killed and 1000 wounded. The Turks reach the Suez Canal."

Nov. 25. "The Turks controll [*sic*] the Suez Canal at Kantara."

The total number of prisoners claimed to have been captured in the month of November works out at 268,508, and on one single day, the 14th Nov., 10,000 guns and a quantity of ammunition were taken as booty.

Mrs. von Puttkamer must have taken considerable trouble with this singular document, and I cannot understand with what object it was distributed broadcast among the prisoners. The only result of reading such an obviously biassed account of the war was that, as we had no means of discriminating between what was true and what was false, we did not pay the least attention to any of it.

The three wounded men who had been over four months in bed, and whose wounds were not yet healed, were now suffering a great deal of pain from the cramped position, the jolting of the train, and from want of nourishing food. They had tried to get some relief by lying on the floor of the carriage, where they finally settled together in a heap.

The sentry, with whom I was by this time on

the best of terms, began to grow sentimental at the thought of meeting his wife and children, with whom he was to spend a week's leave in the neighbourhood of Coblenz. I tried to find out if he had heard of any talk about a proposed exchange of prisoners, but he could not or would not give me any information.

Light was failing as we reached the Rhine valley. The train crawled slowly under the shadow of the vine-covered cliffs, far to the west the rain-clouds were drifting away as if driven by the last rays of the setting sun, which they had hidden during the day. We had no light in the carriage, and the blackness of the interior darkness was relieved only by the twinkling lights on the distant banks of the Rhine. By the time the train reached Coblenz the wounded men, though not asleep, were in a condition of dormant torpor, while the sentries slept heavily, dreaming, no doubt, of their soon-once-more-to-be-met buxom fraus.

At Coblenz most of the German wounded who had started with us from Cambrai came to their journey's end, and the station was crowded with Red Cross people who had come to meet them. There were no serious cases, nearly all arms and a few superficial head wounds. Here also we saw the last of our two fat sentries, and their place was taken by two men who belonged to some very antiquated sort of Bavarian Landsturm, harmless,

inoffensive creatures both of them. They actually put their rifles up on the rack, whereas the other sentries had clung tight to theirs on the whole journey from Cambrai. We immediately got permission to smoke, which had been refused us before, and I again made inquiries about food and drink with the usual result. No arrangements had been made for feeding prisoners, and as our own stock of food was getting low an effort had to be made to get something done.

It was not long before the doctor in charge of the Coblenz ambulance, tall and thin, with a black beard, came along inspecting the wounded. He asked if there were any men who required to have their wounds dressed, explaining that we would get to our destination the next day, and he would not dress any one except if absolutely necessary.

The men said they preferred to wait, and I then pointed out to the doctor that the accommodation for five badly wounded men was insufficient, so that they had to lie on top of each other on the floor, and that we had been given practically no food since we left Cambrai.

The doctor answered that no other accommodation was available, and he expressed some indignation at our not having had any food, promising to send some along at once. We got some nice hot coffee, a large piece of German black bread, with a

roll and sausage each, and made our first meal at German expense.

After the train started on again the big sentry, who looked rather like a Scotch Highlander, and came no doubt from the mountain forests of Bavaria, produced a couple of night-lights, with whose slender flickering the carriage was dimly lit up.

Our new sentries had no idea of discipline or duty whatever. They seemed to look upon themselves as showmen travelling with a collection of curious beasts, for at every station where we stopped people took it in turns to come right into the carriage, and we met with considerable annoyance and impertinence from many of them. One German, who said he was shortly going to the front to kill some Engländer, tried to drag my greatcoat from me, but this was too much for the sentry, who ordered him to desist.

Owing to the constant entry of these unwelcome visitors it now became impossible to think of sleep, for whenever I tried or pretended to doze I was pulled up and asked to answer some impertinent questions.

The type of German soldier that now began to predominate was of a far different class to what we had met with before. It is probable that the men we had conversed with between Cambrai and Coblenz had been to a certain extent tamed by experience at the front, whereas the older and more

ignorant class of Landsturm, who at every station forced their attentions upon us, spoke to us and about us as if we were dangerous criminals, and on several occasions if it had not been for the sentries we would have been roughly handled.

It was at Aschaffenburg, on the Bavarian frontier, that we had occasion to be really alarmed at the hostile attitude of the crowd on the station platform.

We reached Aschaffenburg at three in the morning, and were informed that we were to stop there for five hours. There was nothing for it but to try and get some sleep; this, however, was not to be allowed. A curious-looking mob of men dressed in bits of all uniforms collected outside our carriage and proceeded to go through a pantomimic exhibition of hate. The leader of this mob was a nasty-looking ruffian, more than half drunk, who kept calling on us to come outside and fight; also threatening to come inside and cut our throats, and brandishing a big pocket-knife, he looked quite up to doing it. However, the mob, which was getting more and more excited, was eventually dispersed by an officer, who rebuked them for insulting men who were defenceless and disabled.

After the dispersal of this collection of ruffians, who looked as if they had stepped off the stage of a comic opera, we still continued to be plagued by a constant stream of visitors. One group of these

soldiers came in about five in the morning and behaved with great rudeness and brutality. The wounded men had by this time settled on to the floor of the carriage, all in a heap, and had fallen off to sleep.

The sentry was telling our visitors that one of the Engländer had been shot in the face and was badly disfigured; whereupon a German soldier pulled the poor fellow out of the sleeping mass on the floor and sat him upon the seat, the others standing round pointing with their fingers at the poor mutilated face with coarse jeering laughter. The young Irish soldier sat patiently through it all —his blind eye was a running sore, the torn cheek in healing had left a hideously scarred hollow, and the mouth and nose were twisted to one side. His condition would have stirred pity in the heart of a savage, and yet these Germans laughed and jeered.

This scene comes back to me with a fresh bitterness when I see the able-bodied young civilians in this country—they must number several millions—who should be ashamed to be seen alive until the perpetrators of deeds such as these have been brought to account.

This poor fellow came from County Carlow. Is there a man in Carlow or in all Ireland who could have witnessed this scene unmoved?

So much stronger is the impression of things seen than things heard that, although I have second-

hand evidence of far worse horrors—of wounded men shot, of men of a well-known regiment kicked and beaten along the road to a German prison—none of these things, no atrocity of Louvain, no story of women and children tortured, has moved me so much to a deep loathing of Germany as the pathetic sight of this young Irishman and his heartless tormentors.

Reading this morning's *Times,* I find that Mr. T. P. O'Connor used in the House of Commons the following words: "The Irish people have a loathing of the very name of conscription." I have no means of ascertaining how far this be true, but whether true or not, I know that if the Irish people could see this war as it really is, as the Germans have made it, there is scarcely a man throughout the length and breadth of Ireland who would not make any sacrifice in order that such horror should be avenged.

From three to half-past eight we had waited at Aschaffenburg subjected to a continuous round of insult, painfully cramped on the hard benches, and half frozen with the cold of a frosty January morning, so that it was a relief when the train at last moved on.

Our route now lay through the beautifully wooded hills of the Bavarian Highlands, and the countryside reminded me in many ways of Spey-

side. The air blowing from the spruce woods was most refreshing, and in spite of the cold we were glad to have the pale winter sunshine streaming in through the open windows.

Our train was now reduced to two coaches, which had been hitched on to a local country train, and so we advanced more slowly than ever, and stopped at the very smallest stations. We seemed at last to be getting away from the omnipresent German soldier, for the wild-looking country through which we were passing did not look as if there had ever been any inhabitants, and on the station platforms an occasional soldier on leave was the only reminder of war that could be seen.

The sentries, perhaps relieved at being in their native wilds, became quite talkative, and we were soon on most friendly terms. As no breakfast was to be hoped for from any of the stations, we agreed to pool what provisions we could get together between us. I had nothing but half of my German sausage, the other men had some bread, and the sentries produced two bottles of cold coffee, so we were all able to make quite a good meal.

This surprising atmosphere of cordiality was marred by a visit of inspection. A very shabby *Unterofficier* suddenly opened the door leading into the corridor, and proceeded to pour a volume of abuse on us all, finally settling upon me as being the

only representative of the enemy who seemed to understand what it was all about.

I did not indeed understand very much, but could gather that the substance of his complaints was that we were too comfortable, and should have been travelling in a truck! After this excited individual had passed away, I asked the sentries what all the discourse was about, and they said that the fellow enjoyed getting a chance to scold somebody, as he was constantly in trouble with his superior officer, and got more than the usual share of slanging that falls to the lot of the German soldier.

On leaving Aschaffenburg we had been definitely assured that our destination was Nuremburg, and for that reason, when at about 11 o'clock the train entered the picturesque valley of the River Main, on the banks of which the town of Würzburg is situated, I little thought that here was the end of our journey, and here was to be our future prison home.

Hardly had we drawn up at the station when it became obvious that our destination had been reached.

A number of Red Cross officials were on the platform, which was lined with stretchers. There was no time for more than a hurried farewell, but before leaving the carriage the young Irishman, whose name was Patrick Flynn, begged me to accept the only thing he had to give me as a souvenir, and pressed into my hand a Belgian five-centime nickel

coin, which I shall always keep in remembrance of the unselfish kindness with which these poor wounded soldiers treated me on our long and painful journey.

CHAPTER VII

WÜRZBURG

"Turbatus est a furore oculus meus; inveteravi inter omnes inimicos meus."—*Psalm* vi. 8.

On our arrival at Würzburg, before leaving the railway carriage, all the soldiers except myself were handed a slip of coloured paper marked "Hütte Barracken No. 14." A most unpleasant-looking person, who spoke a little English, and wore a very superior air, was in command of the stretcher-party that carried me across the station. I kept asking for my luggage, a hand-bag and a fragment of the German sausage which had been left in the carriage, and was told it would follow later, and meantime was, like myself, safe in good German hands. However, my valuable belongings were eventually put on the stretcher beside me. While waiting on the platform my English-speaking attendant volunteered the information that there were already over 200 British officers in the place. This was lying for lying's sake, or perhaps it was a lie told to the wrong person, and should have been reserved for the citizens of Würzburg.

The morning was a bitterly cold one, and the arrangements made for our transport from the station gave us the full benefit of the freezing north-easterly wind. The vehicle into which the stretchers were lifted does not deserve the name of ambulance, nor had it any pretension to the title, for it was not even honoured with a Red Cross. It was just a common lorry, such as is used in the district for carting wood, covered with a tarpaulin supported by a longitudinal bar on transverse stays. The tarpaulin, which had been rolled up on one side while the stretchers were being placed in position, was rolled down again. A German ambulance man jumped up behind and off we went. Each stretcher was provided with a blanket, which afforded some small protection from the cold blast which blew through the open end of the cart. None of the soldiers with whom I had travelled from France were in this cart, and at first I thought that all the occupants were Frenchmen. But the man next me was an Englishman, dressed in French uniform, who had been with me in hospital at Cambrai. His face was so drawn and haggard that I had some difficulty in recognising him. This poor fellow would not answer me at first, and then whispered that he did not want the German Red Cross attendant to know that he was an Englishman, and hoped to pass for a Frenchman as long as possible, so as to get better treatment. The

other Frenchmen lay silent and motionless, worn out with exhaustion and want of food. By slightly rising on my side, I could see following far behind us a long string of carts similar to our own. The wind, which was now chasing here and there some few fine drifting snow-flakes, had doubtless kept the streets clear of pedestrians, and there were few spectators of the dolorous procession. Some small boys fell in behind, and played at soldiers escorting a convoy, marching in step and singing in tune, only to be chased away presently by a watchful policeman. We crossed a stone bridge over the Main and almost immediately turned in, on our left, through the high wooden palisade which surrounded the hospital huts—our temporary destination.

The tarpaulin was quickly rolled up, and my four companions lifted down on their stretchers and taken away. My stretcher was lifted on to the ground, and remained there for five or ten minutes, close to a group of officers, one of whom appeared very annoyed at my having been brought to the wrong place; he presently came up and politely asked me my name and rank in very good English. This, I afterwards discovered, was Dr. Zinck. He told me that I was to be sent up to the fortress. I was helped off the stretcher, and, owing to the cold, had great difficulty in hobbling along, and was very relieved to find that I was to drive up to the castle in a comfortable motor *coupé*,

probably the one used by the doctor himself. A hospital orderly got up beside the driver, and a very tall sentry, who had great difficulty in getting in his rifle with the bayonet fixed, squeezed in beside me.

The Festung Marienberg, about a mile outside the city of Würzburg, is a place of great architectural and historic interest. Previous to the days of heavy artillery, the hill on which the fortress is built provided a naturally impregnable site, which had been used for defensive purposes from the earliest times of which any historic trace has been recorded. When St. Kilian in the seventh century brought Christianity to Franconia from far Iona, he was at first very successful at the "Castellum Virtebuch," and converted the Frankish commander. A few years later a chapel was built within the walls, dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the fortress became known as Festung Marienberg.

In the middle ages the castle was famous as a stronghold of the warrior bishops of Würzburg, and stood firm during the revolutionary periods which followed on the teachings of Huss and Luther, even when the surrounding country had been laid waste, and the town of Würzburg captured by a rebel army. Once after the peasant army had been betrayed, surrounded, and almost annihilated, the unfortunate survivors were taken

away to the Festung Marienberg. "Thirty-six of them," says a contemporary writer, "had their heads cut off, and the council and aldermen have been taken prisoners; God only knows what will be done with them." It was a common punishment in those days for a prisoner to have his eyes gouged out, or his fingers chopped off. At the present time these somewhat barbaric customs have been considerably modified, and although the Rittmeister who was in command of the fortress during my residence there did not resort to such extreme measures in dealing with his prisoners as had been found necessary in the sixteenth century by the Margrave of Brandenburg, he did his best, as I was soon to find out, to make us feel the burden of captivity.

As the motor began to climb a rather steep gradient, the silent sentry, with a wave of his hand, introduced me to the outer battlements of the Festung Marienberg. Between this outer wall and the castle moat, the long steep slope on the west side has been laid out as a garden with shrubs and well-grown trees. "There," said my sentry, "is where the officers can make their daily promenade." This I need hardly say was not to be our privilege. The second wall is of great thickness, so that the entrance is like a tunnel, the gradient of the road being so steep as to bring the car down to the first speed. We cross a courtyard with stables on the three sides, and then pass through a third doorway,

FESTUNG MARIENBERG

and drive over the moat into the main court of the castle.

This inner court, of oblong shape, is some 60 to 70 yards long and about 30 broad.

On two sides were the soldiers' quarters, built in the middle of the eighteenth century. The ground floor on the left was used as a stable, and above the stables were the prisoners' rooms. A fifteenth-century chapel stands in the far corner on the site chosen by St. Kilian. An aggressive watch-tower dating from the eleventh century if not earlier, tall and massive, is the most interesting feature in the curious medley of architecture, which presents a graphic picture of the castle's history.

The motor drew up at the far end of the court. I was then helped out of the car and formally handed over to a German N.C.O. named Poerringer, who had charge of the prisoners, collected their letters, &c., &c.,—in fact he was our jailor.

We entered the fortress buildings through a small doorway in one of the old towers, and the broad spiral stairway proved almost too much for my powers of locomotion. However, with a helping arm under each shoulder, they got me along. Halfway up the stair we turned through a door on our right, which led into a large and very medieval-looking guard-room, a long, low room faintly lit up by narrow windows deeply set in immensely thick walls. In one of these window recesses was a desk

and chair barred off from the rest of the room with temporary wooden cross-bars. I was led into this cage, and told to sit down and wait to be interviewed by Mr. Poerringer. My luggage was brought up and put down beside me, and a sentry took his position near at hand.

After a few minutes' rest I began to look around, and as my eyes got used to the dim light I saw my friend the French doctor sitting on a chair farther up the room within speaking distance. A thoughtless *Bonjour, Docteur,* raised the wrath of the sentry, who turned in my direction and grunted out a sentence which ended in *verboten.*

The guard-room then began to fill with soldiers; the loud tramping, the guttural words of command, the curious antique unmilitary-looking uniform, the crowd of squat, slouching, and for the most part bearded, round-bellied creatures, formed in the dim light a picture that might have belonged to a land of gnomes, wicked princes, and enchanted castles.

Such at least was my first impression. Our middle-aged sentries in broad daylight were anything but romantic. Their uniform consisted of Hessian boots, civilian trousers, and dirty green jacket, and always a big black leather belt to keep in the rebellious stomach. They appeared most of them to be wood-cutters, charcoal-burners, workers in the beautiful forests of Franconia, who did not take

kindly to the monotonous duty of guarding prisoners, and to a discipline little less strict than that of the prisoners themselves.

After the ceremony of changing the guard had been completed, and all arms had been examined to make sure they were loaded, Mr. Poerringer, who was in undress uniform, and did not go about with a ridiculous bayonet, came back with some papers which had to be filled in, and by virtue of which my official status as a prisoner would be completed. My luggage was examined courteously and as a matter of form. I was asked if I had any fountain-pens, maps, or fire-arms! concealed in my belongings.

So far, conversation had been carried on in English, of which my jailor could speak but little.

Before leaving Cambrai I had forgotten to look up the most commonly used German word for "paralysed," and the friendly Highland sentry in the train, whose German was no doubt not of the best, had told me that the correct word was "Gicht." I tried this word when explaining the cause of my lameness to Mr. Poerringer, and was much astonished at the result. "Is that all that is the matter?" said he; "you will soon get cured here." Weary of trying to make myself understood, I protested somewhat impatiently in French that there was not much point in bringing a half-paralysed man into such a carefully-guarded prison. With a most

Parisian accent he replied: "Oh, vous êtes paralysé, moi qui croyai que vous aviez la goutte!"

We now, of course, got on very much quicker with the filling-in of papers. One entry, headed "Request to Prison Governors," I wished to fill up with a request to be sent back to England, according to rules laid down in the Hague Convention. Mr. Poerringer shook his head, and said there would be no exchanges until the war was over. My request for a room to myself, so that I could hope for sleep, was not passed, no such room being available, and the column was left a blank. In this first interview Mr. Poerringer was trying hard, probably under orders, to put on a fierceness of manner which was obviously quite foreign to his nature. I subsequently found that in dealing with the prisoners, both French and English, he always displayed a kindly courteousness which was strikingly in contrast with the behaviour of his superior officers.

Still escorted by a watchful sentry armed to the teeth, I was assisted up the broad spiral staircase to the door leading into the prisoners' quarters. Mr. Poerringer pressed an electric bell, and yet another heavily-burdened warrior appeared who led us into a broad, stone-flagged, whitewashed corridor, well lit with large windows overlooking the courtyard, a cold inhospitable-looking place. A more welcome sight than any I had for a long time

been accustomed to was that of two British officers hurrying forward to meet me, one of whom was Irvine, who had been with me in the Civil Hospital at Cambrai, and was much surprised to see me on my feet again. We all marched along to the room which had been allotted to me—the smallest of the five rooms which opened into the corridor, occupied by nine French officers, who were then seated at a long table enjoying their midday meal. My new-found British comrades introduced me to the senior officer, Colonel Lepeltier, who welcomed me with the greatest kindness, and offered me the best that could be supplied from their private store of food and drink, including a bottle of very excellent Bavarian beer, for which, after the exhaustion of the past few days, I felt most thankful. The room, which served as living and sleeping room for ten officers, was none too large. The furniture consisted of the large wooden dining-table, a small wooden table and chair for each officer, two wash-hand-stands, and two chests of drawers shared among the lot. We had, of course, no carpets, wall-paper, or curtains, and no facilities for getting hot water. Two windows looked out over the Main, between them a large and very efficient stove. I looked with apprehension at my "bed"—a wooden plank scarcely three feet broad, on iron trestles; at the "mattress"—a coarse linen sack open on one side, and stuffed with straw, renewed, I was told,

once a month. The two English officers, Irvine and Reddy, with an English civilian, Parke, lived in a large room adjoining ours, along with ten French officers. Two other large barrack-rooms were also occupied by French officers, the total number in the fortress at the time being between forty and fifty.

It was arranged that I should take my meals in the adjoining room, where the Englishmen had their three beds together in a corner known as "the English Club." On the day of my arrival the "Club" held a long sitting, which was attended by many of the French officers, eager to hear what news there might be from Cambrai. Time passed quickly that afternoon. Irvine had much to tell me, and many questions to ask about friends at Cambrai, and Captain Reddy and Parke gave me an outline of their misfortunes. Reddy had been more unfortunate than any of us. He was travelling in Austria before the war broke out, and was arrested on his way home before war had actually been declared. Along with Parke and a number of British civilians, men and women, who were travelling in the same train, he was stopped at Aschaffenburg and taken first to the police station and then to prison. The whole party were locked up in separate cells to be searched; even children of eight or ten years were dragged screaming with terror from their mothers, and locked away by them-

THE COURTYARD AND CHAPEL, FESTUNG MARIENBERG

selves. I do not remember many details of the story, but Reddy and Parke told me that it was a very near thing for them both; they were suspected and vehemently accused of being spies, of which baseless charge there was, of course, not the faintest shred of evidence.

I was glad to learn that the austerity of our prison life was mitigated to some extent by permission to buy extras in the town. A list of commissions was made up weekly, and might include jam, honey, cream-cheese, dried fruits, articles of toilet, and beer. Every prisoner was entitled at this time to write one letter a day. A hot bath was to be had once a month, prisoners being taken down in batches under strong escort to public baths at Würzburg. The doctor came once a week to see all who needed attention; an occasional inspection, and a weekly visit from the hairdresser, completed the list of important events in the deadly dull routine.

The food supplied by the authorities was, on the whole, of bad quality, badly cooked, and insufficient.

Breakfast at 7 A.M.—A roll of potato bread, and a cup of tea, coffee, or milk.

Lunch at 12.30—Soup, which varied from day to day in colour but not in taste, or rather lack of taste.

One dish of meat with cabbage and a potato. The meat was almost always pork, disguised

in strange manner. Once a week we had "beef," very tough and quite uneatable. Probably horse-flesh.

Dinner—Cold pork and cabbage, sometimes varied by scrambled eggs and salad.

Lights out at 10.

II

The English Club usually spent the interval between dinner and bed in a game of cards, but on this my first night I was too tired to make a fourth at bridge, and hobbled off to my own quarters under the severe gaze of three unfortunate sentries who had to spend most of the night marching up and down the cold clammy corridor.

On arriving at "Room 52" the noisiest game of cards in the world, known as "La Manille," was in full swing, the air was thick with tobacco smoke, and empty bottles of beer stood in serried ranks on the table. Monsieur l'Abbé was playing with the Doctor against Colonel Lepeltier and another officer whom I privately nicknamed "Granny." Granny's main ambition in life seemed to be to escape from fresh air, and even in the close atmosphere of tobacco smoke and fumes from the red-hot stove he was wearing all the underclothing he could put on, and round his neck a huge muffler.

The presence of M. l'Abbé in the uniform of a private soldier was the result of an appeal by the Pope to the German Emperor to allow priests serving in the French army the same privilege when taken prisoners as are accorded to officers.

I cannot describe Colonel Lepeltier better than by saying that he represented the typical soldier of Napoleonic days. His career in Saharan and Moroccan campaigns had already proved him to be a leader of no ordinary merit. He possessed a great number of medals, which, as a prisoner, he did not wear, and had been wounded almost as many times as he had been decorated. It was impossible to get from him any account of his adventures in the present campaign, but I gathered from what his brother officers told me that he had behaved with extraordinary gallantry at Charleroi, and fell riddled with bullets when leading the last remnant of his regiment in a counter-attack to save the rest of the Brigade. He had been hit in the leg, his right arm, pierced by a bullet, was withered and useless, and three other bullet-holes in different parts of his body brought to fifteen the total number of wounds received during his military career. His wonderful cheerfulness was an example and a consolation to us all. I remember when we were all discussing how long the war would last—this problem was always a subject of speculation and conversation—Colonel Lepeltier declared that no

one should give any thought to themselves, or worry about the probable length of their imprisonment. "I don't care," said he, "if we are here for seven years. J'ai confiance dans la France. La France triomphera et tout le reste m'est egal." The doctor was quite remarkably like the white rabbit in "Alice in Wonderland," plump, short, blonde, closely-cropped hair, a tiny moustache, an apologetic air, and an aggravating habit of continually saying, "Ah, pardon." At 10 o'clock M. l'Abbé, who was the last up, put out the lamps on the table. Candles were blown out one by one until the only light left was that of a single candle by the bedside of a young cavalry officer who spent most of his time reading in spite of the continual noise. To keep a candle alight after "lights out" was an offence which, in our room, met with instant punishment. "Rosteau, Rosteau!" some one shouted, and I never knew if this was a slang word of warning, but it was always followed, as in this instance, by a whizzing boot hurled at the offender's head. This was the signal for the despatch of projectiles of all kinds,—tin boxes with a bit of coal inside hurtled across the room and fell on or by the enemy with a deafening crash, hair-brushes, slippers, stale rolls of bread, were flying in the dark from one side of the room to the other. The performance was generally closed by Colonel Lepeltier, whose orders for silence were always instantly obeyed. To

break the silence of the night was against the unwritten law, except for one purpose—to stop snoring. Here it was Granny that was the chief offender. In spite of the hardness of my bed, and the impossibility of turning round without falling out, I think that I might have got some sleep if it had not been for Granny—a most kindly, lovable man by day, but an aggressive, vulgar fellow at night, for whose blood I have often thirsted in the early hours of the morning. The usual method for stopping snoring was to whistle loudly. If this did not produce the desired effect, a clever shot with a boot was sure to be successful in rousing not only the snorer but the whole room.

Shortly after six o'clock the day began with the entry of our French orderly—we had one to each room—with the morning ration of bread on a large tray: two small rolls to each man. After the rolls had been distributed round the five rooms, the cups of coffee, tea, or milk were brought along in the same way. This was breakfast. I tried the coffee one morning, found the tea just as bad, and finally settled down to hot milk. Getting up was of necessity regulated by the fact that we only possessed two washhand-stands among ten people. With washing, dressing, and shaving, I generally managed to spin the time out to about 10 o'clock, at which hour I used to take up quarters in the English Club for the rest of the day. The room

which my English comrades occupied possessed many advantages over my own: it was far larger, and owing to the presence of a strong fresh-air party, the windows were kept open continually. In my room, where the stove was always at a white heat, fresh air was looked upon with disfavour; the windows were opened a few inches while the room was being dusted, or when tobacco smoke was too thick, and I, as a lover of fresh air, was in a minority of one. In "53" room the partisans of fresh air included not only the three Englishmen but the senior and more assertive of the French officers. In spite of the unanimity which reigned in room "53" on this debatable subject of windows open or windows shut, party strife was nevertheless very much in evidence, and centred chiefly round the question of noise. The room was divided into as many sections of opinion as the French Chamber of Deputies. Five officers hailing from or about Marseilles, who lived in a row at the far end of the room, represented the ultra Radicals. They declared for the unlimited freedom of man, and elected to make as much noise as suited them at all times of the day or night. O—— belonged to a party by himself. He was to sing and whistle whenever the spirit moved, but when he engaged in writing and reading, as fortunately was often the case, the rest of the world was not expected to interrupt. The English party, openly setting its

face against noise of any kind at all times, was supported somewhat weakly by two or three adherents who were not strong-minded enough to accept the whole of our Party Policy, and were inclined to advise moderation in all things. Our political opponents—the Meridional ultra Radicals —were known as the Gollywog, the Calendar, the Owl, the Pup, and Consul. The Owl and the Calendar (so called because he only shaved on Sundays, and the day of the week could therefore be known from the colour of his chin) were comparatively silent partners to the conspiracy of noise, but the Gollywog, Consul, and Pup made up amply for their deficiencies. Their favourite occupation consisted of inane discussion shouted across the room. "Et autrem*ain* je dis que dans le service il faut tutoyer les hommes. J'ai trente-cinq ans et je sais ce que dis." "Eh! mon bon." This to the protesting Pup. "Vous n'avez pas le droit de parler, vous êtes jeune, vous sortez de l'œuf, vous sortez de l'œuf." This expression of contempt for the youth of the Pup was always the last word of the Gollywog, who would strut up and down the room shouting, "Maintenant vous n'avez rien à dire, vous sortez de l'œuf, vous sortez de l'œuf." Consul, so called chiefly on account of his agility and quickness of movement, famous also for an entirely original method of consuming bread and cheese, took part in noise along with the others of his party more

often in chorus than in solo, but none of them except the Gollywog had any idea what a nuisance they were to the whole room.

III

At 10.30, in answer to a great shouting of "Promenade, Promenade" from room to room, those who wished to go for a walk in the "garden" assembled together at the end of the corridor. The garden entrance was at the far end of the court-yard, and in spite of the moat and the triple lines of battlement, the promenading party always crossed the court under escort. It took me about five minutes to cross the yard. Irvine and Reddy always stayed behind to help me along. We were never allowed to start without an extra guard, sometimes two or three, but generally one soldier, rifle loaded and bayonet fixed. Our sentry must have felt, and certainly looked, extremely ridiculous escorting a cripple at the rate of seventy yards in five minutes. What we used to call the garden, Baedeker briefly refers to as follows: "Visitors are admitted to the terrace (view of town) on application to the sentry (fee)." The terrace extended about a hundred yards in length between the barrack buildings and the moat. The total breadth is not more than about fifteen feet. Most of the

space is taken up with flowerless flower-beds, extending the whole length of the terrace, with a double row of vines. A narrow pathway about four feet broad was all the space available for exercise. Doubtless the view from the terrace is very fine, and perhaps worth a "fee to sentry," but we were very tired of it. On the right, across the valley at the highest point of the wooded hill, stands the Frankenwarte—a hideously ugly watch-tower; lower down, about half-way to the river, the "Kapelle," a pilgrimage chapel, looked after by religious, whom we could sometimes see walking about their garden, black dots on the far hillside. The Ludwigsbrücke crosses the Main far away below, and twice a week at the same hour we used to watch a regiment of infantry cross the bridge, and the strains of the "Wacht am Rhein" could faintly reach our ears when the wind was favourable. A group of factories form an ugly background to the whole picture, but we found in them a cause for rejoicing, the tall smokeless chimneys bearing witness to the stoppage of work and to the power of Britain's fleet. Three sentries were always on guard during our daily walk, one at each end of the garden and one in the middle, although the only means of exit was to drop down a precipice. The wall on the moat-side bore an interesting inscription to the memory of four French soldiers who had

fallen at the spot when the castle was stormed in 1796.[1] A number of cannon-balls, half embedded high up in the masonry of the barrack buildings, testify to the inefficiency of artillery in the days when our great-grandfathers were at war. There was one feature about our terrace promenade which attracted more attention from the promenaders than the view over the town or the fresh air from the hills. I cannot give a fair picture of the Festung without referring to it and to some unpleasant details which the fastidious reader may like to skip. In the very centre of the terrace, hard up against the path, is a large cesspool covered over with two very badly fitting iron lids. The sanitary arrangements for the whole fortress—that is to say, prisoners and guard—are contained in a wooden shed, which stands in the centre of the courtyard just opposite the windows of our corridor. Alongside this shed is another cesspool, fortunately properly closed in. This cesspool is emptied once a week or once a fortnight into an *open cart,* which then proceeds to our garden to be emptied. This process goes on the whole morning. On this day it is impossible to keep the windows open in the corridor, and a visit to the terrace is, of course, out of the question. Even on the next day the air is most unpleasant, and if there is any rain the cess-

[1] General Jourdan was surprised and heavily defeated at Amberg and Würzburg on the 24th August 1796 by Archduke Charles, brother of the Emperor of Austria.

pool in the garden overflows, and the narrow path is turned into a stream of sewage.

As the castle clock strikes eleven, the terrace party are marched back across the courtyard by a strong guard, and I follow slowly in rear, with a sentry all to myself, dodging manure-heaps and tacking to avoid pools of dirty water and tracts of nameless mud, so that my snail-like progress causes no little worry to the attentive sentry. I spoke to the doctor one day of the absurdity of not allowing me to crawl across the yard without a soldier with bayonet fixed, but the doctor rather had the better of me, for, said he, "The sentry is not provided as an escort, but as a guard of honour!"

Opposite the old doorway entrance leading up to our cold corridor there is another door with a stair leading up to some rooms which are occupied by the permanent staff of the fortress, perhaps by the men who, in times of peace, collected fees from visitors to the castle. In the morning, on our way out, the window above the doorway was always filled with three smiling baby faces, and on a fine day two of the children always took their stand outside the door. Francie was the name of the eldest little girl. She was not more than eight years old; she wore a neat little blue frock; her hair was of beautiful fairness. She was a great friend of Reddy, and always answered his "Guten Morgen, Francie," with smiling shyness. The fat baby, not very clean,

with tousled, flaxen curls, could only just walk, and held nervously on to his sister's little finger. Francie at first was very frightened at my appearance, hobbling along on crutches, and the poor little baby fell right over and began to howl right lustily. But Francie soon got to know me nearly as well as Reddy, and her pretty smile was the brightest thing in the whole of Festung Marienberg.

The midday meal was at 12.30. Brown bread, ground-nut butter, and Gruyère cheese were extras that could be ordered at every meal; and the French orderly, when he came in to lay the table, was greeted with cries from all in the room, each officer shouting out for what he required. "20 pf. de beurre" brought a small pat of quite edible butter, 25 pf. was the price of a fairly large-sized helping of brown bread, and 10 pf. for a thin slice of cheese. Cheese and butter were expensive items, as by the time all the thumb-marks had been scraped off, the ration was much reduced in size. The soup was doled out in the kitchen, which, I have forgotten to mention, was at the end of the corridor and the door guarded by a sentry. The loaded soup plates were brought in on a large tray carried by two orderlies. The plates were generally full to the brim, and the orderly would seize one plate in each hand, planting a large and very black thumb right into the swirling soup. Waves of soup then splashed onto the floor or disappeared up a dirty

sleeve. I never ate soup while at Würzburg, and even now seldom do so without thinking of the black thumb. The next and final course came in on the trays as before, and was served on oblong plates divided up into four square compartments—meat in one corner, potatoes in the second, and sauerkraut in the third, the fourth being left to eat out of. A knife and fork was provided for each officer, who had, however, to buy his own glass; and in our room, by very special favour, we had been allowed to buy a coloured cotton tablecloth. It was very seldom that any satisfaction could be got out of the meat course, which was almost always pork in some shape or form, and the mainstay of every repast was provided from our private stores of cream, cheese, honey, and brown bread. Supper was, as I have said, merely a slice of cold ham or a sausage and potatoes. The "Gehaltsabrechnung" for this not very luxurious fare was 31 m. 70 pf. per month. Officers of the rank of lieutenant were paid 60 m. a month, from which a deduction was made for board.

We were allowed to see two German papers—the "Kölnische Zeitung" and the "Lokal Würzburger Anzeiger." These papers arrived after lunch, and anything of interest was translated aloud for the benefit of the club by Reddy, who knew German thoroughly. The former showed a disposition to break forth into sensational headlines, and

was rabidly and sometimes comically anti-English. On the occasion of the Heligoland fight, one paper announced in large print that the British battle-cruiser *Lion* had been sunk. In next day's paper we discovered, hidden away in a corner, the statement that the *Lion,* crippled beyond repair, had been towed into port, and that the *Blücher,* owing to an accident in the engine-room, had unfortunately sunk on her way back to harbour. News from the British front was not often given much space, and it was easy to guess that at the time there was nothing much doing in that direction. The news from Soissons was naturally made the most of, and was very disheartening reading.

I remember how amused we were at the account of a coal strike in Yorkshire. This, we were all convinced, was an ingenious German lie. Much as we used to long to see English newspapers, I am now thankful that we were not allowed to see them, and that my fellow-prisoners are still confined to sceptical reading of the "Kölnische Zeitung," and can enjoy undisturbed their own imaginary picture of Britain at war, which a knowledge of the truth would quickly dispel. The long dull days of life at the Festung Marienberg recall a memory of much yearning for news of England, of speculation as to the date of our liberation, and above all, of an intense desire to witness some day the defeat and humiliation of our insolent enemy. But the misery

of inactivity when so much is needed to be done, the monotony, the aimless futility of existence that is no longer useful, this is the real trial which makes imprisonment intolerable. There are few prisoners in the Festung Marienberg who would not joyfully exchange their lot for that of a Welsh miner, and work till they dropped for enough bread to keep body and soul together. The mental sufferings of those who are imprisoned in Germany is intensified by the fear that others who have not learnt the truth from bitter experience will not believe. We, in the fortress, knew the power of Germany—could feel it in every incident of our lives. We lived in the very midst of an organisation which moves as one for one purpose—the destruction of European civilisation and the substitution of Teutonic conceptions. The truth which years before had sounded incredible, when voiced by the authority of Lord Roberts, and had been dismissed by the majority of the nation as the senile vapourings of a decrepit Jingo, this truth was now as familiar to us in the Festung as the air we breathed.

What if the nation still fails to understand? If a message could come from our imprisoned countrymen in Germany, from our long-suffering allies in Belgium, whose integrity we guaranteed by a solemn promise which we made no arrangements to keep, from all who know by hard experience how Germany treats those whom she has conquered,

such a message would declare that no sacrifice can be too great provided the military domination of Prussia is finally destroyed. Those who have felt the power of the enemy know also that if we are to be successful nothing less than the maximum effort is demanded. What this means Britain as yet does not begin to understand.

IV

EXTRACTS FROM MY DIARY, EXPANDED AND EXPLAINED

"*Sunday, Jan.* 10*th.*—Mass, 8.30. Snowed a little."

M. l'Abbé officiated. Very nearly all the French officers attended Mass. From my room two were either too ill or too lazy, and Granny, who, in the early hours of the morning, was frightened of catching cold, did not appear outside the bed-clothes. The officer who used to read at night, at whom boots were thrown every evening on the stroke of ten, declared himself to be a Pagan, and so he also remained in bed. The choir loft of the chapel had been set aside for the use of the prisoners, and thither we were escorted down a dark stair and long corridor by the usual armed sentries, one of whom remained with us in the church. The body of the church was filled with German soldiers.

During Mass the organ was played and hymns were sung by the German part of the congregation. After Mass was Benediction, when it was our privilege to sing. Colonel Lepeltier, with a very powerful voice, acted as leader of the choir, the Frenchmen singing with great *entrain,* as if to let the enemy know they were not downhearted. On this Sunday M. l'Abbé preached a short sermon on the gospel of the day, but this privilege, no doubt displeasing to the lower part of the congregation, was afterwards withdrawn, and on the following Sundays we had to endure a discourse from a German priest.

"*Monday, Jan.* 11*th.*—Snow. A sentry committed suicide last night in the corridor. Great excitement among the Germans."

It was very early on Monday morning, long before daylight, that a noise of running feet outside the door of our room showed that something abnormal had happened.

Colonel Lepeltier ordered every one to stay in their beds, and we speculated vainly as to the cause of the uproar until the orderly came in with "Breakfast." A sentry had shot himself through the head, and was lying where he had fallen at the far end of the corridor, guarded himself now, poor fellow, by a brother sentry. No one was allowed out of his room until the corpse had been removed,

which was not done until several officials had inspected the remains. When the request was over and the corridor cleaned up, a stain on the stone floor and a bullet-hole in the wall remained to tell the tragic story. Snow was falling that afternoon, and there was no chance of getting out to the terrace, so that the rest of the day had to be devoted to Poker and Bridge, games of which all were heartily sick. Reading was difficult on account of the ceaseless noise kept up by Gollywog and his merry men. Our game of Bridge was played at the end of the dining-table, the other end being occupied by chess, of which the Gollywog and Consul were the chief exponents. In the hands of these experts chess became the noisiest of all parlour games. They played on the co-operative system, two players sitting at the board, the others standing up at each side of the table. No piece was moved without great discussion, conducted in a loud voice, with much gesture. As soon as a piece had been moved the chess-board became a sort of storm centre into which even non-players seated at the far end of the room would recklessly plunge.

As a result of one of these discussions two of our southern friends quarrelled in real earnest, and most dramatically vowed to fight a duel at the close of the war. Reddy suggested it was a pity to put off the encounter indefinitely, and meantime proposed the use of coal buckets at fifteen paces.

Strangely enough this real quarrel brought peace to the room for a few minutes, but the parties soon made friends again and the noise went on with renewed vigour. At seven o'clock the table was cleared and laid for dinner.

Dinner as usual, cabbage and cold sausage, the latter somewhat more palatable when fried on the stove to black crusty cinders.

"*Tuesday, Jan. 12th.*—Doctor's visit. I asked to be exchanged. There seems to be some hope."

This first meeting with the doctor was to me a cause of much apprehension. In the event of an exchange of prisoners, it was in this man's hands that the final decision would lie as to what prisoners were unfit for military service.

Shortly after 11 A.M. a French officer told me that the doctor was visiting my room. The corridor was very cold that morning, and, partly from the cold, partly from nervousness, my entry into the room where the doctor was waiting was most impressive. For the moment I lost control of my limbs, and nearly collapsed into the doctor's arms.

Dr. Zinck is a small fair-haired man, about thirty years of age. He speaks English with fluency, having lived for some years in New York. He had visited Scotland, and stayed, he said, at Skibo with Andrew Carnegie. When no other German officer was present his speech and manner with me was

always polite, sometimes verging on kindness. Whilst I was resting on a chair he made an examination of my head, and read the certificate which Dr. Debu had given me at Cambrai. This document, I was glad to see, seemed to create a favourable impression. He then asked me to try and walk with one stick only. In attempting to do this, which at times I was well able to do, my right leg, fortunately, refused to move forward. The doctor took down some notes in his book and seemed to have quite made up his mind as to the hopelessness of my condition. In answer to my inquiry, "There will be no exchange of officers," he said, "and you will never get any better." The latter part of this not very cheering remark was fairly satisfactory, as it meant that if ever there was to be an exchange, my name would be on the list. The hardships at the Festung which I felt most keenly were the hard straw bed and the impossibility of getting the hot baths which at Cambrai had afforded me so much relief. The doctor offered to give me some morphia pills; but these I refused to take, and asked to be given a proper mattress, or to be allowed to buy one. On a subsequent visit he informed me that this could not be permitted, adding that he "dared not do too much for the English." Such, to the best of my remembrance, were the very words he used, seeming genuinely ashamed at having to refuse such a request.

When Dr. Zinck paid me his next visit, he was accompanied by the Rittmeister Niebuhr, the officer in command of the fortress. It would be an unwarrantable insult to the German army to say that the Rittmeister was a typical German officer. Medium height, sparely built, sallow complexion, dark hair and moustache, with his burlesque swagger and affectation of dignity and authority, he was such a caricature of a German officer as may be seen in a comic illustrated paper. Hatred of the English and a bullying manner appeared to be his chief qualifications as Fortress Commander. A safe occupation this to worry defenceless prisoners, and one more suited, perhaps, to his capabilities and inclination than a soldier's work at the Front. My first introduction to this unpleasant individual was when the doctor brought him to see me in answer to my request for hot baths. I was lying in the English room on the corner bed, known as the Club Sofa. I struggled up into a sitting position, and saluted the visitors to the best of my ability. The Rittmeister did not deign to take the slightest notice. Dr. Zinck explained that I had asked for hot baths three times a week, and requested permission to hire a carriage down to the public baths. The Rittmeister, with an insolence of manner worthy of Hudson Lowe, told the doctor to say to "Dem Mann" that the monthly bath, graciously allowed to officers, according to the wise German

regulations posted up in every room, for the purpose of personal cleanliness, quite sufficient was. During the whole conversation I was continually referred to as "Der Mann," which, according to German etiquette, is, from one officer to another, the height of insolence.

Once a month eight officers at a time were allowed down to the public baths in the town. Those who could walk were escorted down by half a dozen guards, and the walk must have been a welcome relief from the monotony of the fortress. Later on, after I left, Reddy got leave to be taken down to the dentist, and wrote to say how delightful it was to be seated for a short time in an arm-chair. It is not often that a dentist's chair is looked upon with such favour. Those who could not walk down to the town were driven in a sort of prison van; most of the invalids were from my room—Colonel Lepeltier, Granny, and three officers, who were still very lame, one of whom has since been exchanged. Irvine, who was not quite up to walking, and myself, very nearly filled up the van. After we had got in there was not much room for the two sentries, who, like most of their kind, needed a lot of accommodation. It was, however, quite impossible to get the rifles in with the bayonets fixed. After one or two attempts, and after sticking the point of their bayonets nearly through the roof of the van, they finally gave it up, unfixed bayonets, and sat

holding them in their hands. The windows of our carriage were of frosted glass, barred right along inside and out, so that we could see nothing of the town as we went along. A quarter of an hour's drive brought us to our destination. The van turned into a large covered yard, in one corner of which was a large motor waggon and a pile of worn-out knapsacks, boots, and military kit of various nature. From this yard a flight of stone steps led down into a basement where some men were making packing-cases. A long corridor led to the bathing establishment, which was very clean and tidy. The accommodation was, however, limited—four baths and four shower-baths. Irvine very kindly helped me in and out of my bath and assisted me to dress, the sentries meantime keeping a sharp look-out outside my door. When we had finished, the old woman in charge of the establishment came round with Mr. Poerringer, who had driven down on the box-seat, and collected a mark from each of us. As I was ready dressed before the rest of the party had quite finished, I made a start down the corridor, so as not to keep everybody waiting. This was at once noticed by one of the sentries, who zealously followed behind me; whereupon I reduced my speed to the slowest possible crawl.

On our return journey one of the party produced a flask of what is known in the fortress, and per-

haps elsewhere, as "Quetsch," a very fiery, sweet-tasting, white liqueur. We all took a nip, and I ventured to offer some to our melancholy guardians. To attempt such familiarity was, of course, a serious breach of regulations, and they shook their heads regretfully. They were a most amusing-looking pair, sitting very squeezed up, opposite each other, in the corners nearest the door, each gripping firmly to his bayonet, both of them short and round and solemn, like Tweedledum and Tweedledee.

"*Jan.* 15*th.*—Inspection."—A general inspection of the fortress was carried out every two or three months. The inspection on this day—the only one which took place while I was a prisoner—resulted in my getting into trouble with the inspecting officer, who, as I had been warned by my fellow-prisoners, would be on the look-out for any pretext to punish the English. I was sitting at the dining-table in the English room, with my back to the door, when the inspecting party came suddenly in. I could not turn round to see, and did not know who the noisy visitors were until I saw that every one in the room was standing to attention. I slowly rose from my chair and, leaning both hands on the table, managed to keep a fairly good balance, which I nearly lost in taking my pipe out of my mouth. When the group, which consisted of the Inspecting Colonel, the Rittmeister, and Mr. Poerringer, came

opposite to where I was standing, they stopped and looked at me. "Who is that fellow?" said the Colonel. "What is he doing here? He is surely not an officer. He is not standing at attention, and has only just deigned to remove a pipe from his mouth. Has he been wounded?" "No," promptly responded the Rittmeister, but Mr. Poerringer stepped forward and corrected him. They then passed round the room and went out without further observation. Five minutes later Mr. Poerringer came in and said that the Colonel wished to speak to me in the corridor.

Outside the door was the inspecting officer—large, not very tall, somewhat red in the face, no doubt a pleasant enough man after his second bottle of wine. I leant against the wall and saluted by lowering my head on one side and endeavouring in vain to raise the right arm to meet it. Mr. Poerringer and the Rittmeister stood frozen to attention, whilst the Colonel delivered a long statement to the former in order that he might translate it for my benefit. I was being severely reprimanded. Apparently the meanest soldier in the German army was a better-mannered man that I was. Of course, bad manners was only what might be expected of a British officer. If I did not know how to behave, they would soon teach me, &c., &c., &c. Every word of this tirade, most of which I understood, was then repeated in French by Mr.

Poerringer, and his translation was certainly milder than the original. The Rittmeister stood by with an evil grin. When they had all finished, I told Mr. Poerringer that I was physically incapable of showing such outward signs of respect as were due the inspecting officer, and that my failure to show him honour was not due to any desire to be discourteous. My explanation really seemed to me—unable as I was even to stand without crutches—almost an insult to such common-sense as a German officer might be supposed to possess. My court-martial of three then withdrew further up the corridor, consulted together, and sent Mr. Poerringer to me to say that "in view of what I had said, the Colonel had very kindly agreed to overlook my offence, and therefore I would be let off the punishment of cells."

"*Jan.* 16*th.*—Hairdresser. The Rittmeister calls again." Once a week came a gold-spectacled, middle-aged hairdresser, accompanied always by a sentry with the ever-loaded rifle and the everlastingly fixed bayonet, who stood behind the chair in which the officers took turns for a shave and hair-cut.

In the afternoon we had another call from the Rittmeister, whose visit this time was the most exciting incident which took place during my stay at the Fortress, and was for a long time the subject

of animated discussion in all the rooms. The whole affair really began and ended with Gollywog. Mr. Poerringer came in about four o'clock and said that the Rittmeister wished to speak to Lt. C——. Gollywog went out into the corridor, remained absent for fully five minutes, and came back with the Rittmeister, who advanced into the middle of the room and ordered "All English officers to leave the room." This was most interesting, and the four of us went out into the corridor greatly wondering what new game was being played. After about a quarter of an hour the Rittmeister came out and went off down the corridor, whereupon we hastened back to hear what had happened. The Rittmeister had made a most genial and polite speech. He had heard that the English officers had not been behaving properly, that they were quarrelsome, disagreeable men, and so on, for a good few minutes, ending up with a request that the French officers would kindly come to him if they had any complaint to make, however small, concerning the conduct of the English, who would then promptly be put in cells. "Bobjohn," a Lieutenant de Reserve, who knew German very well, replied briefly on behalf of the French officers—that they were all, English and French, brothers-in-arms and firm friends. The Rittmeister then went off in a very bad temper, disappointed that his clumsy plot to get the English into trouble had been a total failure. We were all

indeed more amused at, than angry with, the Rittmeister's impertinence, but many of the French officers thought that Gollywog's part in the affair was open to suspicion; in fact, he was suspected of having complained to Mr. Poerringer. I think it, however, more likely that the sentries, who were always spying and trying to see what was going on in the room, had something to do with it. Next morning I happened to meet O—— in the corridor and immediately started swearing at him in a loud voice. He grasped the idea at once, and I could see the nearest sentry watching us narrowly. Sham fights between the French and English were started at intervals during the day, with the door left wide open so that the sentry could get a full view. In my room great annoyance was expressed at the whole affair, and Colonel Lepeltier declared that the Gollywog's conduct was open to very grave suspicion. As a matter of fact, hardly any of the French officers were on speaking terms with the Gollywog, and so this rather unpleasant incident did not make any difference to his relations with his fellow-prisoners.

V

"Send me a post-card when you have time," writes a friend from Germany; "letters and post-cards are the only things we live for." And so it

was at the Festung Marienberg. Two or three times a week Mr. Poerringer would come in with a bundle of letters and call out the names of the lucky ones, the officers all crowding round with eager faces, listening, waiting, hoping. Two officers only sat apart and watched, not without envy. One, a Frenchman from Lille, could never hope to hear from his wife or family, as communication with invaded territory is not permitted.

The day after my arrival at Würzburg I wrote three letters—one letter home, one to X.Y.Z., one to the American Ambassador in Berlin. At that time there was no restriction as to number, although later not more than one letter a week was allowed. I could not hope for news from home till the end of February, as six weeks was generally the time which elapsed before an answer came from England. Irvine told me that on arriving at Würzburg he had written informing the American Embassy at Berlin of his position, and that in reply the Ambassador expressed a wish for information concerning the whereabouts of British officers. I therefore wrote to the Embassy stating the fact of my arrival at Würzburg, explaining the nature of my wounds, enclosing a copy of the certificate from Dr. Debu also—and this was the part I feared might not pass the Censor—asking the Ambassador to put my case before the German authorities at Berlin.

By the same post I wrote to X.Y.Z., whose letter to Captain S—— had so providentially fallen into my hands at Cambrai. In this letter I gave a list —in answer to her inquiry—of all officers and men of whom any information had reached me at Cambrai. I also drew a pathetic picture of my own situation, enclosing a copy of the much-copied medical certificate, and begging X.Y.Z. to use influence on my behalf.

While at Cambrai and Würzburg two questions were constantly in my mind—first, Would there be an exchange of officers? second, If there was to be an exchange, how was I to make sure that my case would not be forgotten?

Pope Benedict XV., although I knew it not, was working hard to obtain a satisfactory reply to the first question. The happy solution of the second must depend on my two letters to Berlin and on the wide circulation of my medical certificate.

This certificate was a most alarming piece of evidence as to my condition, and I am glad to say that the event has so far proved the medical diagnosis to be a pessimistic one.

Medical men have told me that in nine cases out of ten such injury as is mentioned in this certificate results in the inconvenient habit of a spasmodic falling on to the floor, attended with foaming at the mouth and other unpleasant symptoms, all of which are included under the mysterious

title "Jacksonian epilepsis." On account of this medical certificate, which more than hinted at the probability of my acquiring such unpleasant accomplishments, I was known to my friends in the fortress as "Jackson."

My two letters had been sent off on the 10th of January. Mr. Poerringer very kindly gave me this information, he himself being the Censor. On the 26th January my first letter arrived, the first letter since my leaving England six months ago. It was from the American Embassy. Reading my name and address on the envelope, I began to feel a "person" again. The world outside the fortress was more real to me from that moment than it had been for many months. The letter dated 21st January acknowledged receipt of my communication of 9th January, and regretted to inform me "that the question of exchange had not yet become an actual fact, and that the exact provisions whereby exchanges, when actually effected, will be governed have not yet been determined. . . . As regards the approximate date in the future at which the exchange of wounded prisoners will take place, the Embassy regrets to be unable to give you information. Negotiations are on the way, but no definite agreement has yet been reached." During that afternoon my letter was a subject of much argument. Never did I dare allow myself to read into these sentences any hope of freedom. It is better

for a prisoner to live with no prospect of release than to hope vainly and be disappointed. So the letter was put away and kept out of mind as far as was possible.

A few days afterwards I happened to meet Mr. Poerringer in the corridor. He bade me good morning with even more than his usual kindness, and produced a letter. This was from X.Y.Z., and reading this letter over now, it seems hard to believe that when I read it in the fortress I dared not find in it any hope or any reasonable ground for hope. "I will certainly do my very best," says the letter, "to get you included among those for exchange. I gave your medical report to the American Consul, . . . and he has promised to go into the whole matter thoroughly with the authorities. The matter of exchange will take some time to arrange, I believe, so don't be too disappointed if you don't hear something at once." Here, at any rate, was the definite statement that there was to be an exchange, yet it was still a struggle in my own mind between hope, and fear that dared not hope, and fear was still the conqueror. Mr. Poerringer came into our room with some papers very shortly afterwards, and I asked him if it would be any use asking for an interview with the officer commanding at Würzburg. Mr. Poerringer's reply roused the whole room to attention: "Vous allez probablement aller en Angleterre." Nothing more would

he say, except that a letter had arrived about me from the War Minister. All my friends crowded round to discuss whether any credence might be placed in Mr. Poerringer's information, and the verdict was that it would not be safe to take him at his word. Little belief existed among my fellow-prisoners, even after Mr. Poerringer's statement, of the possibility of any exchange taking place. The odds laid during my first week at the Fortress against my being exchanged were 20 to 1. That evening, in spite of all the favourable signs, odds of 10 to 1 against were offered and taken.

VI

Life in the Festung was becoming very hard. Snow had fallen heavily. For several days, owing to alternate frost and snow, the courtyard, whether a mass of slippery ice or of penetrating melting snow, was now a barrier to the garden, across which I dared not venture. The corridor was so intensely cold that it was no place for me to take exercise in. My only relief at this time from lying on a bed was to take a few turns up and down the room during the hour of the promenade, when all windows were wide open. Every inch of the picture as seen from those windows is familiar to me. Far away, beyond the low vine-covered hills,

now deep in snow, the spruce woods stand out pitch-black on the all-white horizon. More distinct than usual in the snow were the quaintly-shaped roofs of ancient houses and the numerous steeples and church towers for which Würzburg is celebrated in guide-books. Traffic on the river had ceased, for the big, broad barges were ice-bound, and only in the centre of the stream the yellow water ran freely, hustling along great lumps of ice and melting snow. Over the bridge ran the electric tram lines that connect the town with the large suburbs on our side of the river, and the cold air—it was now freezing very hard—carried with distinctness the clanging, whining sound of the passing trams.

Wooden huts, surrounded with a high paling, lay right below, but the distance was just too great to enable us to see if they were inhabited by French or English prisoners. Away beyond the huts were large stone and brick barracks, from where on Sundays a band was wont to come forth and march close up to the fortress,—a real German band this, they played extremely badly.

During the time of the hard frost a field close by the barracks had been flooded and turned into a skating-rink, where all day long the skaters, black dots in the distance, circled round on the white board.

The steep avenue leading down from the fortress

through the wooded slope was at this time an object of interest. A number of small boys were enjoying themselves tobogganing down the rough uneven surface, running races, upsetting and rolling down the slope head over heels in the snow, with cries of joy and laughter. Some forty feet below the window, along the parapet of the inner battlement, two sentries stamping out a path on the snow looked up from time to time with suspicion at the figure leaning out of the prison window. Night was falling. The two sentries were impatiently waiting to be relieved. At last the relieving party appeared, escorted by a corporal; with due ceremony the guard was changed and the new sentries began their dreary tramp with rifle slung over their shoulders, beating hands and stamping feet against the ever-increasing cold.

Large electric arc-lamps had recently been fixed outside the windows, so that a strong light was thrown on the parapet and wall below, and the sentry could see to shoot any one, utterly foolish, who should attempt to climb down from our window to the parapet—a place, even when safely reached, from which there was no possibility of further escape. Electric light is used most lavishly by the town of Würzburg, and the effect of the twinkling lights of the city, seen from the fortress, is very beautiful, but one must be in the right mood to appreciate such things.

"Shut the window, Jackson, and let's have a game of poker." This was the voice of "Bob-john"—the best of friends. I have said too little of these friends of mine—both French and English—too little of their kindness, patience, and unselfishness with one who was often irritable and unreasonable.

"*28th.* Zeppelin. A great rush for the windows."—I did not realise before how tremendously big these Zeppelins are. It was a grand sight to see the grey-white ship, big as an Atlantic liner, sailing over the river, and to see it turn and come straight towards the castle on a level with our windows. When only some few hundred yards away, so near that we could see the features of the men in the passenger car, the ship turned again and circled round the fortress, and from the windows of the corridor we watched it disappearing into the sunlight over the distant hills.

This evening was marked by the arrival of a parcel of books, Tauchnitz edition, which we had been allowed to order. No doubt the publishers are glad of the chance to unload their stock of British authors, as, after the war is over, there will not be much demand for the Tauchnitz volumes.

Early in February another guest arrived at the fortress—another member for the English club.

This was Foljambe, from L'Hôpital Notre Dame, Cambrai, who had made a very good recovery from severe wounds. Our new comrade, still very weak, only able to walk a short distance, arrived late in the afternoon, and was allotted a bed in my room. His experiences on the journey from Cambrai were very similar to mine. Although I have little direct evidence of how the Germans treat our soldiers, the information which Foljambe gave me on the subject is conclusive.

Foljambe, before coming up to the fortress, was put by mistake and left for nearly an hour in a soldier's Lager on the outskirts of Würzburg, and his story confirmed what the French orderlies had told us about the ill-treatment of the English soldiers.

"The English soldiers," said Foljambe, "go about like whipped dogs." Most of them were ill from want of food and warm clothing. Any excuse was seized upon to inflict hard punishments, and the constant bullying which was permitted, if not actually ordered by the officer in charge, made the men's life a perpetual torment. Foljambe had no time to get many details from the men, as the Germans hastily removed him from their company as soon as they found out that he was an officer.

On the field of battle no danger could silence the cheerful jest of these brave men; in hospital no suffering had been able to damp their cheery cour-

age. The picture of these same soldiers cringing, looking from left to right when spoken to, as if to avoid a blow, is one upon which I cannot allow my thoughts to dwell.

"*Feb.* 11*th.*—Nothing to record." This is the last entry in my diary. The doctor came again with the Rittmeister, and spent a long time by the bedside of Lieut. C——, who had been shot through the sciatic nerve, and was apparently permanently lame. They left the room without taking any notice of me. This was depressing.

It was understood that C——'s case for exchange was being considered. Dr. Zinck had taken no notice of me on this occasion, probably because my case had already been decided; but this view did not occur to me at the time. A rumour had been going round the rooms that an exchange of French officers, but not of English, would shortly take place.

The afternoon, my last in the fortress, passed slowly and sadly, like so many others. Poker had long ago been abandoned. Bridge was played with small enthusiasm.

A visit to the big room near the end of the corridor helped to pass away the evening. Here Captain D——, owner of some big mills in the north of France, showed me a working model loom which he had made out of firewood with no other

tools than a penknife. With the loom he was weaving a "carpet" the size of a small pocket-handkerchief.

Feb. 12th—Der Tag.—At 9 A.M. I was shaving at the toilet-table in the window recess when Dr. Zinck came into the room alone, which was unusual. He walked over to where I was sitting, and the following was our brief but exciting conversation—

"You are happy now."

"Why should I be happy this morning," said I, "more than any other morning?"

"But don't you know? You are going back to England."

Then for one brief moment I believed, but yet tried to keep from showing my joy, lest perhaps the news were false.

The doctor walked up and down the room in silence, then turned to me with a worried look. "Don't say anything about what I have told you. You and C—— are going away, but I should not have told you. I did not know you had not been told." And then he left the room.

Some one announced that the van in which we used to go down to the baths had arrived in the yard, presumably to take me away. On going into the corridor to see this welcome sight I met Reddy and Irvine hurrying to hear the news, which, of course, had at once been spread throughout the

Fortress. We were standing in the corridor talking, when Dr. Zinck ran up. "*Nix, nix,*" he said, with his Bavarian accent, "there will be no exchange with England, on account of the submarine blockade. A telegram has come from Berlin. You are not going away."

Hope and despair now fought confusedly; where was the truth? Colonel Lepeltier comforted me with his assurance that the doctor's last statement was a lie; that Dr. Zinck had become frightened lest the Rittmeister would be angry at my having been told the good news too soon.

Certainly the van was still in the yard, the horses had been unyoked. There might be hope after all. I went as usual to room "53," lay down on the corner bed—the Club sofa—for the last time took up the book I had been reading the day before, found my place—the last chapter of "David Copperfield."

I had reached and nearly finished the last page, when the door was flung open and the Rittmeister entered in the well-known manner, suddenly, and with a quick look round the room, as if hoping to catch somebody up to mischief.

As soon as he came into the room I knew instinctively what he had come for: while trying to get off the bed to salute I heard the much-longed-for word "Austausch." "You must leave at once," he said—"at once."

Reddy helped me off the bed and down the corridor, to say good-bye to my friends and get my luggage.

Mr. Poerringer and the Rittmeister followed behind, the latter, as Reddy remarked, eyeing me narrowly. I took longer than usual in this last walk down the corridor.

The Rittmeister followed into the room, went over to C——, and told him he was to leave next morning, then walked round the table past the bed where I was sitting, and left the room without further sign or word. I said good-bye to Colonel Lepeltier and my new friends, and as it was midday Mr. Poerringer suggested that I should stop for a few minutes in room "53" to get some lunch.

The meat course on that day was a dish of tripe which few of us could face, and while I was eating my bread and cheese Reddy made up a parcel of bread and Leberwurst for me to take along.

Mr. Poerringer stood by the window watching, orders having been given that I was not to be left alone.

When Mr. Poerringer remarked casually that the train left in half an hour, and that if I missed it there would be no other, I did not wait to finish the bread and cheese.

Reddy put the parcel of food into one pocket of my greatcoat, a small bottle of beer in the other, and I bade adieu to my friends, feeling quite

ashamed of and yet unable to hide the joy of my going.

Reddy for the last time helped me down the stairs and into the van. Mr. Poerringer got in beside me.

I said good-bye to Reddy, and for a moment felt miserable at leaving so kind a friend to endless days of a misery from which I was now free.

As the van moved off he waved his hand with a cheery smile, and then turned away up the spiral staircase.

Mr. Poerringer sat silent in a corner of the carriage (the same vehicle in which we had gone down to the baths). We crossed the courtyard, passed the entrance to the terrace, the sentries guarding the bridge over the moat. We entered the tunnelled archway, went slowly down the steep hill, and drove through the last barrier. These things I could see, for the window was open.

My thought was still struggling with the realisation of what these things meant, and of what lay beyond these prison walls, when, as we drove into the main road, Mr. Poerringer broke the silence, and there was a tinge of envy in his voice, "La guerre est fini pour vous," he said, "La guerre est fini pour vous."

CHAPTER VIII

WÜRZBURG TO ENGLAND

"La guerre est fini pour vous."

The van drove slowly down the road which runs along the outer fortification of the Castle. Mr. Poerringer did not speak again, and I was silently trying to grasp the reality of the situation.

We stopped at the hut hospital barracks where I had been taken on my arrival at Würzburg five weeks before. Mr. Poerringer got out and saluted Doctor Zinck, who was waiting outside the gates. The Doctor caught my eye and grinned from ear to ear, behind the back of some other officers; probably he would have spoken to me had it not been for their presence. I smiled at him rather feebly. At this time my mind contained but one idea—the fear that something would occur to prevent my departure from Würzburg. I was frightened to speak lest some word of mine might be made an excuse for detention. The four British soldiers who now got into the van were evidently in a similar state of mind. Two of them had travelled with me from Cambrai. We none of us

spoke. The door of the van shut out the face of the still smiling doctor (bless the man! he was perhaps really pleased to see me safely off), and we jogged slowly on.

Our conveyance stopped in the goods station yard. Three of the soldiers managed to hobble along without help, but the fourth, the same young fellow in the K.O.S.B. who had travelled in my carriage from Cambrai, had to be carried on a stretcher. I followed very slowly across the railway tracks, and then along the platform to where our train was waiting. Two first-class carriages were reserved for us, one for the "Offizier" I heard them say, and another for the men. The train was full, and passengers at every window stretched out their heads in curiosity, but none made any remark. We did not stay many minutes in the station. As the train moved off, Mr. Poerringer was talking to some of the station officials and did not look up. He had not spoken to me since leaving the gates of Marienberg, and perhaps had mistaken my state of stupor for sulks.

It is not often that events in life will so be shaped that the highest state of happiness can be obtained merely from the fact of finding one's self alone in a railway carriage. The absence of a sentry made itself pleasingly felt. The sitting on a soft cushion was a long-forgotten source of contentment. In

my selfish joy I nearly forgot the friends I had left at the Festung.

On the left side of the line as you leave Würzburg, the Fortress stands out on the hillside at a distance of something over a mile as the crow flies. The windows of my former quarters, where we used to stand and watch the trains, could just be recognised, and as I looked a white sheet was waved up and down from the English room. I answered back with my handkerchief, waving it until the Festung Marienberg had passed out of view.

The soldiers in the adjoining carriage, having discovered that a communicating door between our two carriages was open, came in to keep me company. M——, in the K.O.S.B.'s, remarked that this was a pleasanter journey than the last we had performed together. I asked him about the other men who had been in our party, but he had lost sight of them. M—— looked thin and pale, and in far worse condition than when he left Cambrai. He told me that he had been kindly treated in hospital, but had been given very little nourishing food. Another man who was wounded in the spine and had been in another ward in the same hospital, said the treatment was fair but food short. All the other men complained of the want of food. They said that the able-bodied prisoners were most willing to work to escape the monotony of prison life, but that they were given so little food in the

work camps that many of them were unable to stand the long hours, and had to return to hospital.

My recollection of this part of our journey is most vague. I took a childish pleasure in recognising the country through which we were passing, and in comparing my feelings on the two journeys. Near the first little country station after you leave Würzburg there is a large nursery, and a large notice put up by Herr Somebody with the words "Baumschule." Farther on the train passes close to a large quaintly roofed building bearing the inscription "Jägerhaus." On the journey from Cambrai I had noticed these things, and my thought, anxious to get away from reality, had speculated about the Jägerhaus and its past history, and had wondered if the owners of the Baumschule sold plants at a price cheaper than obtained at home.

But now, during the first few hours of the journey, my mind was incapable of taking in impressions. We stopped at Aschaffenburg, probably outside the station. I have no recollection. We stopped many times in the afternoon, but we took little or no interest. The men had a very small piece of black bread each, and I gave them my Leberwurst and the brown bread. Darkness came down soon. We stopped at stations now and again, and rejoiced each time the train moved on.

Night had long fallen when we made our first change. I do not remember the name of the sta-

tion, but the place appeared to be of considerable size. We were helped out of the carriage by Red Cross attendants, and saw no soldiers with fixed bayonets. I was offered the choice of a stretcher or a bath-chair, and chose the latter. The night was dark and wet, the station badly lit up.

We were taken along the platform and put into the Red Cross dressing-station, which contained a sofa, two arm-chairs, an operating-table which looked as if it had never been used, and a glass cupboard with medicine bottles, rolls of lint, &c. An oil-lamp hanging from the ceiling threw a dim light.

After five minutes' wait an official looked in at the door, and was about to pop out again, when I asked a question: "Can we have something to eat?" The official said "Wait," disappeared, and promptly returned with three of his fellows. They were surprised at hearing we had not dined (it was, I think, now about 9 o'clock), and seemed doubtful if anything could be done in the absence of special orders. The situation was made easier by my offering to pay. "Für alle?" they said. "Yes, für alle."

I was wheeled off at once in the bath-chair still farther along the platform to the station restaurant, a small tidy room with half a dozen small tables covered with clean white table-cloths. A waiter came forward, helped me into a chair, and presented the menu. I ordered a beefsteak, with potatoes and

peas. It was pleasant to sit down to a clean white table-cloth, with a plate (instead of the trough used in the Festung) and knives and forks and spoons.

Presently the beefsteak arrived, beautifully cooked and daintily served. I asked for some beer, but this was "verboten." "Well, then, bring me a tumbler and a corkscrew," said I, withdrawing from my greatcoat pocket the bottle of stout which Reddy had given me on my departure from the Fortress.

The price of this excellent dinner was 1 m. 75, including a cup of coffee. This was at a time when Germany was reported in our papers to be suffering from shortage of food supplies. The menu offered a great variety of dishes, and the only evidence of scarcity to be noticed was the small-sized ration of bread with which I was served.

After the coffee, and cigars! the Red Cross official came in to say that it was time to take places in the train. This time we had no longer the luxury of a first-class carriage, but still there was plenty of room, as we had a whole coach consisting of four or five third-class compartments. The men said they had been given a very good dinner, for which no payment was demanded.

Just before the train started our party was increased by the addition of a sentry. The men had all settled down to sleep in the different compart-

FESTUNG MARIENBERG—ENTRANCE TO INNER COURTYARD

ments, and the new arrival shared a carriage with me.

He was of a very different type from the soldiers who had guarded us on the other journey—a young man, probably of good position, and certainly of good education, very fat, unhealthily so, quite bald, and wearing gold-rimmed spectacles; he spoke with a North German accent, very difficult for us to understand. He desired nothing better than conversation, and told me all about his own adventure with the army that marched on Antwerp, where he had contracted typhoid fever which had left him bald and short-sighted. He was now condemned to transport work for the duration of the war, and did not hesitate to say to me that the prospect was distinctly disagreeable. We both agreed that war was unpleasant for every one concerned.

Our ultimate destination was Flushing, but my friendly fellow-traveller only expected to go with us as far as Osnabrück, at which town we could not hope to arrive before midday of the day after next. The train we were now in contained a number of wounded Germans. They came along the corridor during the night and made friends with our party. Some of them could speak a little English. Like all the other German soldiers I have heard discussing the war, these men expressed great reluctance to return to the front, and were hopeful that the war would speedily be terminated. This is probably

the normal attitude of every soldier on both sides.

The German soldier is oppressed by the unexpected duration of the war. He is apparently victorious on all fronts, and still the war drags on. When he goes home on leave there is not much to cheer him up. Every one seems to be in mourning, and all his friends of military age are away. There is one thing only that enables him to face the hardships of war with unquestionable courage. From childhood he has been taught that the highest virtue in a man is loyalty to his Kaiser and the Fatherland.

German patriotism finds its expressions in personal loyalty to the Kaiser, and devotion to the Fatherland which is almost fanatical. Some people would say that conscription has played a large part in the development of this national religion of patriotism, but the history of the German people can hardly be brought to support such a proposition. Nor does the mere fact that patriotism is taught in the schools provide a sufficient explanation.

The source of a flourishing, vigorous patriotism may often be discovered from a study of economic conditions. That patriotism is affected by economic conditions must at once be admitted. In a State, for example, where the majority of the population are slaves, patriotism will be confined to the slave-owners, who will fight vigorously to prevent their

slaves being captured by foreign slave-owners. An agricultural country, where the majority of its inhabitants are owners of the soil they till, affords the most favourable environment for the growth of patriotic sentiment. The Serbians are without doubt the most patriotic people that history has ever known, and Serbia is a country almost entirely devoted to agriculture, where the great majority of the inhabitants are owners of the soil, so that, in the mouth of a Serbian peasant, the words "my country" refer to something more than an abstraction.

But German patriotism stands likewise on a sound economic basis, for Germany possesses an enormous agricultural population, the greater proportion of whom are owners of the soil—the figures, according to last available statistics, being 86 per cent of the total population of the country. Starting with these favourable conditions, the German Government worked hard during peace-time to strengthen by education and discipline the instinctive patriotism of the citizens. Loyalty to the Kaiser and Fatherland, respect for the army, the duties of a citizen to the State, are lessons that the German child is taught at school.

In addition to the economic and educational, there is a third factor—and most essential of all—in which Germany is by no means wanting. This

third factor is the influence of history and tradition.

"C'est la cendre des morts qui créa la patrie."

A consideration of these three influences, economic conditions, educational appeal to the intellect, historical appeal to tradition, will help us to understand the power of German patriotism.

In one of the thoughtful editorials to which readers of the "Irish Homestead" are accustomed, I find condensed into a single phrase the idea which I have been struggling to express. "Duty to one's race," says "A. E.," "is not inevitable. It is the result of education, of intellectual atmosphere, or of the social order."

It is very necessary, but very difficult in war, to keep in view the best side of the enemy's national character. Now among the doctors, hospital attendants, officers and men of the German army with whom I came in contact during my stay in Germany, I occasionally met with straight-dealing and kindness. Three there are among them to whom I would gladly give my hand. But though in the main the Germans are a treacherous race, coarse in pleasure, bestial in drunkenness, viciously brutal in war; they are also brave, disciplined, and patriotic. When the Fatherland is seen to be in danger they will fight to the last loaf, to the last cartridge, to the last man. There will be no sudden

collapse. There will be no surrender by attrition. Ours is no easy road to victory.

The night was well on before our visitors retired to their own compartment. The gold-spectacled, bald-headed escort fell into a heavy sleep, uninterrupted by the frequent stopping at cold, dark, and lonely stations, where the train would sometimes remain quiet and peaceful for perhaps a quarter of an hour, but always started with a sudden rattle and jerk just as I was thankfully dozing off.

Of the following day I have little recollection. Early in the morning we changed trains at a small junction. It was bitterly cold, and the platform, which was covered with snow, was deserted. No stretchers or stretcher-bearers were provided, and those of us who could not walk were wheeled across the station in a truck by two aged porters. Before starting afresh we had a cup of hot coffee and a very small roll of bread each.

The railway now ran through a hilly and thickly wooded country, and our speed, which had never been very rapid, was much reduced by long curved gradients. Snow lay thick on the branches in the dark spruce forests. Rosy-faced children, well wrapped up, on their way to school, stopped on the hard frozen road which ran beside the railway line to watch the train go by and to wave their hands and cheer. A pale wintry sun crept round the horizon.

The railway carriage was almost as cold as the corridor in the Festung Marienberg. Yesterday's feeling of joy merely at the fact of being outside the Fortress was now giving way to impatience at the length of our journey and the slowness of the train.

The picture changed in the afternoon. The train was crossing the broad corn-lands of Westphalia, which, as one huge field, stretch away to the horizon. Here and there were patches of snow, but no hedges, walls, or fence of any kind, and scarcely a tree, can be seen to break the monotony of the landscape. The farmhouses, few and far apart, present a lonely and desolate appearance.

Yet another month and the newly-sown grain would be sprouting, and six months would see the rich harvest, and perhaps the end of bread tickets in Berlin, for Westphalia is the granary of the German Empire.

Shortly after dark we again had to change trains. The platform was crowded with soldiers and civilians. The snow had given way to a drizzling rain, and as our train was not yet in, we sat waiting on high-backed wooden seats, surrounded by a curious and not too well-mannered crowd. I remember one ugly old man with a pointed grey beard, who shook his fist at us and was full of hate, until the loud voice of a N.C.O. ordered him to move on. The moment the order rang out the crowd lost in-

terest in our presence, and the irascible old man was one of the quickest to move.

It was a great relief to hear that another night was not to be spent in the train, as the effects of cold and the fatigues of the journey were beginning to tell on the weaker members of the party. However, we still had three hours to travel before reaching the place where we were to stay the night, and where, the escort said, rooms in a hotel were awaiting us.

It was about ten o'clock before we reached our destination. I am not sure of the place, but think it was Cassel. The station was a large one, and lit up with powerful electric lights. Our train carried a big load of civilian passengers, chiefly women, a great number of whom—in fact, nearly all—wore deep mourning. We had to wait till the platform was clear before the stretcher-bearers came to carry us off.

I do not like being carried on a stretcher without straps. That evening at Cassel we had the best kind of stretcher, with a pillow and blankets which were tucked in all round; and then with a big strap across the chest and another about the ankles, one felt quite secure.

We were first taken to the buffet, which is at the far end of the station from our arrival platform. On reaching the buffet we were unstrapped, so we could sit up and take a cup of warm milk, which

was served out by uniformed women attendants. We remained in the buffet about half an hour. My stretcher was close beside a table at which four big bony women dressed in black were drinking hot coffee. A typically German notice printed in large characters hung in a conspicuous position on the wall:—

Speak German! Do not use enemy language!
"Adieu" is French; say instead—
Gott beschütze Dich.
Gott segne Dich.
Auf wiedersehen.
Auf baldigeswiedersehen.
Auf sehrbaldigeswiedersehen.
Auf ein Rechtherzigesfrohesbaldigeswiedersehen.

We had not seen any official frightfulness for a long time. Some person in authority now came in to the restaurant and lost his temper—not with us, but with the fact of our being in the restaurant. There was no one in charge of our party, so the cursing fell upon the restaurant in general; and shortly after the irate person had departed we were carried away by stretcher-bearers to the waiting-room, which was a few yards farther down the platform.

Here we had to spend the rest of the night, and nothing was said about the hotel and comfortable

beds for which our escort in the train had led us to hope. The waiting-room was furnished in a style common to most big Continental stations. The arm-chairs, upholstered in dark-green plush, were ugly and uncomfortable. The two sofas were designed to repel the weariest of travellers. Although large and lofty, the room was efficiently heated by four large radiators, and four enormous crystal candelabra hung in the centre.

At the far end of the room, which was in semi-darkness, as only one of the candelabra had been turned on, a lady in mourning was sitting alone at a small round marble-topped table. When the stretcher-bearers had gone, the lady spoke to us in perfect English. "Are you the poor soldiers who are going back to England?" she said. "How glad you must be! I read about the exchange of prisoners in the paper." This lady was of German birth, and had lived most of her life in Australia. She said the nations of Europe had gone mad, and that "this exchange of prisoners was the first sign of sanity that she had seen since leaving Australia." She asked if we had had any dinner, and said it was too late now to get anything to eat, but that if we rang the waiter would serve hot coffee.

In answer to the bell the waiter came at once, and I asked him if we could have some beer. He seemed to hesitate a minute until I produced a 20-mark note. The beer was brought in tumblers of

frosted glass about a foot high. It was the best Pilsener. Britain can brew nothing to touch it. There was nothing in the waiting-room just then really altogether German except the beer (and the ugly, uncomfortable chairs). There was very little German about the waiter, who while waiting for our glasses to be emptied, entered into fluent conversation with one of the soldiers.

And the astonishing subject of his conversation was league football. The wounded soldiers, who were inclined to be sleepy when the Australian lady was bewailing the European situation, were now thoroughly enjoying themselves. The waiter told us that he had toured the North of England with a German football team during the winter of 1912-13; he knew all the professional clubs, and was personally acquainted with many of the favourite players in the north country.

One of the wounded men—Private Henry, Lancs. Fusileers, who was an expert follower of league football—started a friendly but determined argument with Fritz (as they called the waiter) as to the merits of the different teams.

Fritz was a real football enthusiast. "I shall never play again," he said; "I am to be called up in a few weeks, and even if I get through I can never play in England again."

"Cheer up, Fritz!" I said; "you have got the best beer in all the world, and as we are not likely

ever again to get a chance of drinking it, you had better bring in another round."

Some of the Red Cross attendants who were on duty in the station that night, young fellows of fifteen or sixteen, paid us a visit but did not stay long; they could not join in our conversation, and they refused my offer of beer with a regretful "verboten."

A soldier friend of Fritz's came in to see us. He had been slightly wounded in Russia some six weeks ago, and was now on his way to the Western Front, much depressed.

Fritz promised to bring in coffee and rolls at six o'clock (our train was to leave at seven). Two of the soldiers slept on the floor, and two dozed in the arm-chairs. Even the fatigue of the journey and the soporific influence of beer did not suffice to induce sleep on the sofa.

Our escort of the previous day joined us at the train next morning. Only a single third-class carriage was provided for this part of our journey, and as it was a very narrow one we were all most uncomfortable. We would reach Osnabrück at 11 A.M., and there, we were told, "the exchange would take place." I speculated wildly as to what form or ceremony would be followed. The local morning paper threw some light on the subject with a statement "that the wounded English officers and men about to be exchanged were to be assembled at

Osnabrück from all parts of Germany previous to being sent over the frontier."

The train seemed to go slower than ever. We came to a part of the line which had been flooded, and a squad of men were repairing the track and rebuilding a bridge. The men were of military age, and our escort said they were Russian prisoners. I noticed in many places along the line that a lot of rough ground had been broken up and brought into cultivation.

Now this work requires able-bodied, healthy young labourers, especially when trees have to be felled and roots removed, and there is no doubt that the prisoners of war are being used for this purpose. Indeed, most of the agricultural work is carried on by prisoners, so that the full strength of Germany's enormous agrarian population is released for the fighting line.

We had to change trains once more (the seventh or eighth change since Würzburg). Our escort, who like ourselves was impatient at the continued delay, expostulated with the station-master, who explained that we had followed a circuitous route in order to leave the main lines free for the passage of troop trains. Large bodies of troops were at that time being shifted from East to West or from West to East.

The day dragged on, eleven o'clock passed, the hour we were due to arrive at our destination, and

still the train monotonously bumped along the single track of the badly-laid country railroad. Our third-class carriage was very cramped and uncomfortable. Such carriages are really not "third-class" according to English notions. But we did not worry about mere physical discomfort. I do not know what my wounded comrades had in their minds. They hardly spoke. But the expression in the face of each man had been changing from the moment they had left the hospital hut *Baracken* at Würzburg.

In my own mind a change had also been working since leaving the Festung Marienberg, with its omnipresent sentries, noisy barrack-rooms, and insolent, ill-mannered commander.

Now that I was no longer treated like a dangerous criminal, I began to think and act in a more rational way. But the change was very slow. For long after I had reached my own home I retained a silent and suspicious manner, which was surprising perhaps to those of my friends who did not know the full story of the Festung Marienberg. I have drawn no exaggerated picture of that prison. I am afraid there are places even worse than Würzburg, although in other prisoner camps, such as Crefeld, Neu Brandenburg, Stralsund, the conditions are very different, and from trustworthy accounts I believe that at Stralsund in particular the officers could not wish for better treatment. They are allowed to play cricket, football, tennis, &c., when-

ever they wish. They can even visit the town under escort, and have a three-hole golf-course, which one of my friends there tells me is "bogey nine." I am thankful that, owing, I believe, to the action of the American Embassy in Berlin, the four British prisoners whom I left behind at Würzburg have been sent to another Fortress in Bavaria, where they are allowed a considerable amount of liberty, and where life is much more endurable than it was at the Festung Marienberg.

On arrival at Osnabrück at 1.30 P.M. on Saturday the 14th February, my experience as a prisoner of war in Germany came to an end. From that day to the crossing of the Dutch frontier on the night of Monday 16th, I was treated with all possible kindness, and every material comfort that could be wished for was offered or provided. I was no longer treated as a prisoner.

Two private motor-cars were waiting at the station to take us to the hospital. Three of our party went off in the first car, and I with the remaining soldier was lifted into the other, and carefully covered up with warm rugs by the officer who had come to meet the train. Both cars were driven off to the hospital, where my companions were to be lodged. The sun was shining frostily as we drove through the bright clean town, which is more Dutch than German in appearance.

The car stopped in a narrow street opposite a

verandah, with a flight of steps leading up from the pavement. On this terrace or verandah stood an old man, short, and heavy about the stomach, dressed in black old-fashioned clothes. He approached me with a bow, washing his hands with invisible soap, "Goot Morgen, sir," "Goot Morgen," —more washing—"Is there anything I can do for you? You ask me. Komm this way, please." He crossed a large entrance-hall. The floor was tiled and slippery, so that I could scarcely walk on it. Sofas were set all round and down the centre, and one or two wounded German soldiers sat reading. They paid very little attention to our arrival. I was shown into an enormously big hall containing about 200 beds. This (from the stage at the far end) had doubtless been a music hall.

The room, which was lofty, but not well lit up, except at the stage end, where there was but a single large window, had been freshly painted white. The beds were ranged all round, and a double row down the centre.

Everything in the room was new. Beds, sheets, blankets, none had ever been used before. By each bedside was a small iron table, and behind each bed hung the patient's hospital outfit, the ugly striped pyjamas and red felt slippers. Everything new and spotless.

The bald, gold-spectacled escort carried in my luggage, and bade me an almost affectionate fare-

well. I was becoming quite inured to surprises of this kind.

In spite of a notice on the wall which said that lying down on the beds in the day-time is strictly forbidden, I lay down on the bed nearest the door and tried to forget my excitement in sleep, but before very long I was aroused by voices from the other side of the screen at the door, and R. D. R. walked around in his kilt, looking just the same as when I had last seen him at Joigny la Chaussé.

"Well, I am glad to see you," he said; "we heard you were killed, and then we heard you were in England."

"How have you got into this party?" I replied; "there is nothing much wrong with you."

Four other British officers followed in behind R. D. I had expected to see a far more crippled band. Major D—— was the worst of the four. One arm was badly paralysed. He spoke with difficulty, a bullet having grazed his windpipe leaving a nasty scar, and he had one or two other bullet wounds in the leg.

M—— and W—— were very lame; each had a broken leg, badly set and short. Captain M—— had nothing wrong with his arms or legs, but a shrapnel bullet had hit him in the face, gone down through the roof of his mouth, and stuck somewhere in his neck, which was bandaged up.

The worst case of all was H——, who presently

came in, supported and half carried by two orderlies. No man in this war has had a nearer shave than H——. He was shot through the base of the neck, and the bullet chipped the spine, causing partial paralysis on one side and complete paralysis on the other. I think it was his cheery spirit and sense of humour that helped to keep him alive.

All of us had long stories to tell. W—— had the most to say, having been shut up for three months with some Russian officers who knew neither French nor English. The remainder of the party all came from Crefeld, which is not many hours by train from Osnabrück.

For some reason the new arrivals were not allowed to have a bath. We were told that anything we fancied either to eat or drink could be ordered for dinner, but that if we did not wish to pay for our food, the ordinary hospital fare would be at our disposal free of charge. We ordered, and were served, a first-rate dinner.

During the afternoon a party of French officers walked into the ward. One of them was rather lame, but the others seemed in very good health. Surprise at the meeting was mutual. They spoke but little English. When we said that we were the prisoners about to be exchanged, these poor fellows had just for a moment a gleam of hope that they also by some mistake were to come with us. We had been together only a few minutes when a sol-

dier came in and took them away. In the short time I had, however, found out that these French officers had no complaint to make of the treatment they had received, and they informed me that a special difference was made in their favour as compared with the British.

Soon after a most excellent dinner, we were glad to turn in. German beds are made in some strange manner. The bedclothes are not tucked in at all, but are folded across the bed in a puzzling sort of way. However, the bed was extremely comfortable, and I slept soundly, the first time since leaving Cambrai.

The next day, Sunday 15th, was a very long one. We were not allowed to leave the ward, which, on account of its huge size, the lack of windows, and the uniform whiteness, was a most depressing place. In the afternoon some kind of religious service took place in the adjoining ward—at least we heard singing of hymns to the accompaniment of a powerful organ—and the proceedings, whatever they were, terminated with "Deutschland, Deutschland über Alles."

The event of the evening was the announcement that next morning we were to appear before a Medical Board, and immediately after would leave for Holland. This piece of information was received with calm. For my part I still had some of the old reluctance to believe in good news, and

Major D—— spoke the thought of all when he said, "We are not yet out of the wood." H——, the most crippled of the party, was the only optimist.

Next morning, shortly after ten o'clock, I was crossing the outer hall—that is to say, I was creeping round by the wall, not daring to venture across the well-polished floor—when the Board emerged from a doorway behind me. They stood and watched me make a laborious circuit back to our room.

We stood to attention, those of us who were able to stand, while the seven or eight German officers filed into the room and took their seats at the table which runs across the whole breadth of the ward, opposite the entrance door. These were men of high rank, and all of a large size except one stout, short fellow, who acted as interpreter. Our names were called, and the examination proceeded in order of seniority. There was no hesitation about any one until Captain M—— was called. His case was the subject of a certain amount of guttural discussion. R. D. R. was the last and longest to be examined, and his fate hung in the balance. The Board seemed to be of opinion that he was not to be exchanged.

The discussion lasted but a few minutes, during which R. D. stood pale and with anxious eyes. They again began to question him. "How many

years' service did you say?" "Three." "Can you drill troops?" "Very little." "Are you qualified to teach musketry?" "No."

Again the withered hand was examined to see if any sign of life could be found in the blue twisted fingers.

I think the casting vote in R. D.'s favour was given by the senior doctor, the only one of the party who was in mufti, and one of the few really human beings I have met while in Germany.

Before going out the senior officer present (a General) made us a speech in German, which was translated to us by the interpreter somewhat as follows:—

"It is all right! You have all passed, and it only remains for you each to come and sign the necessary papers in the doctor's room. The General wishes to know if you have any complaint to make about your treatment, and if there is anything you are not satisfied about the way you have been treated while in Germany you must tell us about it. We wish you to make now any complaints. We want you to be satisfied. You must go back to England contented. We want you to go back to England contented." He repeated these words several times, walking up and down the room as he spoke, looking around with a quick glance at our faces, while the Board in the background nodded approval.

There were no complaints. I thought in silence of my journey from Cambrai to Würzburg, and of the Rittmeister at the Festung Marienberg.

Here was the explanation of the sudden change which began the day of departure from the Festung, the explanation of the first-class carriage at Würzburg station, the indifferent attitude of the crowd on our journey, the good-fellowship of sentries, the free and friendly intercourse with wounded German soldiers, the attention and luxuries provided at Osnabrück. "They" wanted us to go back to England contented.

After the Board had gone the interpreter came back again to make sure—"Please, gentlemen, mention anything. You are all satisfied. Is good, that is gut," and out he went at last rubbing his hands.

"They" had evidently given orders that the about-to-be-exchanged prisoners were to be treated with kindness, just as "They" on a former occasion had given orders that British wounded prisoners, officers and men, were to be treated with a special insolence and brutality.

This affectation of kindness now at the very last moment, the hypocritical pretence, was more repellent than even the insolence of the Rittmeister Niebuhr.

There was, however, one member of the Board whose kindness was really genuine. This was the senior doctor in civilian clothes.

When I went along to the room where the papers had to be signed, he made me sit in his arm-chair and examined my head. I cannot explain the difference between his manner and that of the others. Kindness, in the others so evidently sham, official, and by order, with him was second nature.

"You will get well, quite well in time," he said, "but it will be very long.

"Let me take your arm, you must not fall on the slippery floor. You might hurt yourself badly and not be able to leave us to-night."

Even if I had not understood the German words, there was no misunderstanding the sympathy in the tone of his voice.

The word of deliverance came that evening while we were at dinner. We were told that two motor-cars and an ambulance waited at the door, and in a very few minutes we started off for the station. As the night was dark and wet, there was some delay before the cars could find the platform our train was due to start from. We drove into the station by a goods entrance, and the cars halted quite near the train. In addition to ourselves, a large party of wounded soldiers, about 120 of them, were bound for the frontier.

As I made my way slowly along the platform I saw several of these poor fellows standing about on crutches, one or two of whom I had met before at Cambrai. They were very cheery, and it was cheer-

ing to see them and hear the familiar query, "Are we downhearted?" with its answering roar from the train-load of cripples. But the thin pale faces and ragged clothes bore witness to the misery from which they, the lucky ones, were now to be released.

After waiting for nearly two hours, a German officer of high rank came along to make a final inspection. He asked us if we had any complaints to make, and again repeated the hypocritical phrase, "We want you to go back to England contented." And at last the train moved off. Osnabrück is only forty miles from the frontier. The suspense and worry of the day had told on all of us, and when the much-longed-for moment arrived, and the train actually crossed the frontier, we had all fallen asleep.

Würzburg and all that nightmare in German hands were already slipping far away into the past. The reaction found expression not in hilarious excitement or placid contentment, but in an exceeding weariness of mind and body. Quite early in the morning the train stopped at a small station well over the German frontier. Two ladies came along the corridor with baskets full of cakes, oranges, tobacco, and other gifts. "Oh, you poor men," said a voice in English, "is there anything we can do for you?" It was the first Englishwoman's voice we had heard for a long time (it did seem such a very long time since we left Southampton Water).

The voice and the kind words acted as a stimulant, almost as a shock. Although the incident may seem to be a trivial one, it is stamped in my memory, for it awoke the memory of all that England is, of kind human sympathy, of those qualities so little understood by Germans.

We reached Flushing about 11 A.M. The British Consul and a number of very kind people came to meet the train and escorted us to the hotel which is just opposite the station. Owing to a very bad headache I had to spend the day in bed.

Those of our party who were able went for a walk as free men on the streets of Flushing. They saw the arrival of German prisoners from England, and compared their well-fed appearance in smart clean uniforms with the ragged miserable state of the unfortunate British soldiers. About seven o'clock we were allowed to go on board the steamer. In the dining-room of the hotel I met Major Chichester, who had arrived with all the one-armed and one-legged men from Madame Brunot's Hospital at Cambrai. Many stretcher cases were carried down the gangway, some with bandaged heads and smiling faces; but one or two stretchers were completely covered over, and one dared not think of the burden they carried. Yet others there were who, going back to England, would never see England again. "Are we downhearted?"—the cry was raised at in-

tervals, and from every quarter of the ship came the answer in a convincing chorus.

During the long and very rough sea passage my mind was taken up with the misery of the sea, which in a bad sailor is able to dominate all else. However, the discomforts of the sea journey only intensified the relief of landing on English soil at last.

It was about 8 P.M. before the hospital train was ready to start for Charing Cross. At the end of the saloon in which we were travelling a large gramophone was playing a lively and rather catching air. I asked an orderly the name of the tune, and he, looking at me with an air of suspicion and hesitation, not knowing the tune was unfamiliar to us, replied at last, "It's a long long way to Tipperary."

Indeed the way had seemed long.

THE END